Questions of Life Answers of Wisdom

Volume 2

Sessions with the Sufi Mystic

M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen

SAN RAMO

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الله
GOD
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Questions of Life
Answers of Wisdom

Volume 2

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Sessions with the Sufi Mystic

M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen

WITHDRAWN

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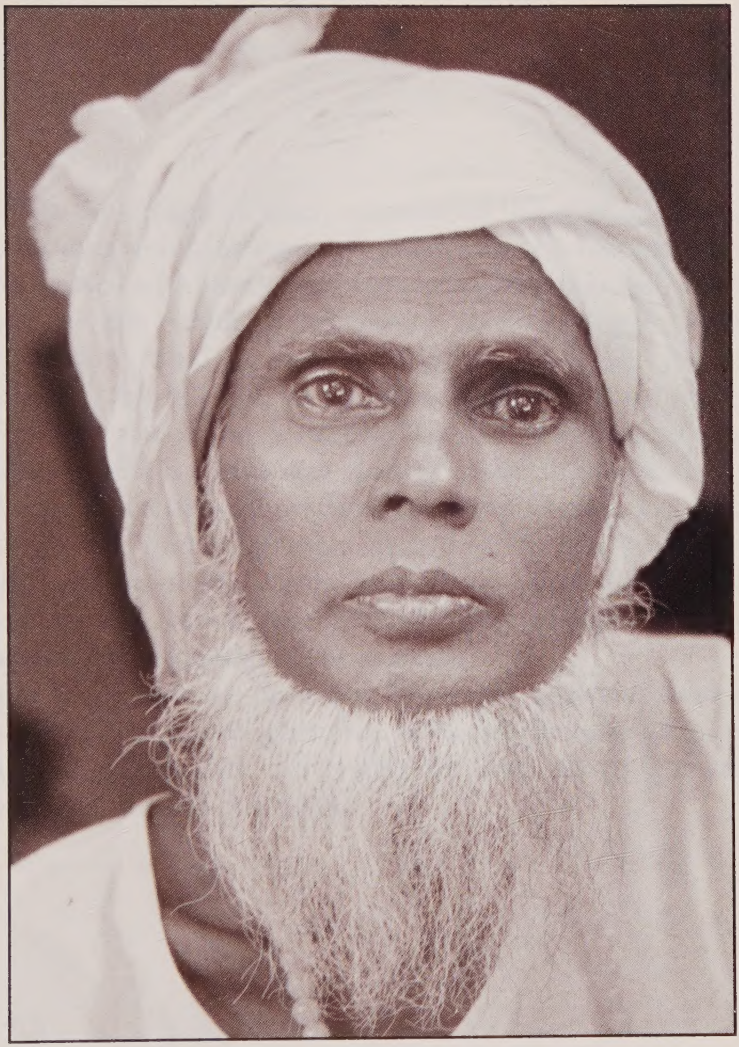

Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen *(Ral.)*

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Editor's Note

This is the second of many volumes of informal question and answer sessions with Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen (may God be pleased with him), a contemporary Sufi sage and mystic.

To make this wealth of information more accessible, the individual questions asked are listed at the beginning of each session, as well as in the table of contents. In the back of the book the questions are cross-referenced by topic, followed by an extensive subject index. In addition, there is a complete glossary explaining the foreign and esoteric terms that defy simple translation into English. Throughout the text you will find calligraphic circles (ﷺ, ﷺ, and ﷺ) following the names of prophets, angels, and saints. These are traditional supplications and acknowledgements of respect, whose meanings can be found at the beginning of the glossary.

Bawa Muhaiyaddeen once said, "For every question, there is an answer." And indeed throughout this book and the volumes to come, he addresses our doubts, our confusions, and the heretofore unanswered questions of our hearts.

Preface

Imagine yourself seated before an ancient, wise, compassionate sage, a very small man with a kindly smile and a twinkle in his eye; one who has traveled the breadth of the world, searched the universe of the soul, and finally found the answer. Imagine that you are at the feet of such a one who has discovered the source of all answers. Feel the awe, the excitement, and ultimate humility of sitting before such a wise man.

And now, imagine just a bit further, that he turns toward you, embraces you with his smile and asks, "What would you like to know, my child?" If your mind were to become still and your heart were to melt and the questions your soul had been yearning to express poured forth, what might you ask, and what shape would the answer take?

This is a book full of such questions and answers, questions asked by people of all ages, all religions, all colors; people from varied walks of life such as students, physicians, carpenters, professors, plumbers, reporters, secretaries, rabbis, ministers, parents, children, and grandchildren, some seeing this wise man for the first time and others who have been with him day in and day out for many years.

This is a book of the spoken word, rich with answers covering a wide spectrum, from the most simple and practical advice to the most exalted and mystical experiences of the human heart and soul. It is a book overflowing with wisdom as it pours forth from the highest spheres of man's consciousness; the levels where man and God are united as one, where the I does not exist but has lost itself within that one compassionate almighty power which is God.

The answers come from Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, an ancient Sufi sage whose wisdom, love, and compassion are so vast that they cut through racial and religious differences, through time, age, and tradition. Although he appeared many years

ago from the jungles of Sri Lanka, no one truly knows where he came from or just how old he is. What we do know is that since the early 1900's, this extraordinarily wise and compassionate sage has been patiently and lovingly answering questions as he does in this book. It was his custom on most mornings to informally receive visitors. During this time he would answer any questions the visitors might pose. While reading through these pages, one may see a very simple question receive a long, eloquent, and profound answer; conversely, one may see a well thought out, seemingly complex question receive a one sentence reply. Yet within his words, so full of truth and divine wisdom, even the briefest reply can make a deep and lasting impression. And although the question came from just one, the answers are for us all.

If these questions and answers are read daily for just a short period of time, they can have a significant effect; for as one's heart opens, the power of these divinely inspired teachings will enter deeply within and greatly benefit all aspects of one's life.

May God protect us. May God grant His grace and peace upon us all. *Āmīn.* May we all progress on the path of the one true Father, the Creator, Sustainer and Nourisher of all lives, that one incomparable power of truth, wisdom and justice. May God protect us and grant us His grace.

Howard Posner, M.D.

"My children, if there are any doubts in your mind, if there is anything that you do not understand, if there is anything pertaining to wisdom that you are unable to find an answer to, please open your heart and ask. It is your duty is to ask your father. If your father knows the answer, he will tell you. If he does not know, he will ask and learn from you. Therefore, you must ask whatever is in your heart that needs to be answered and cleared."

Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen (رضه)

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Session 1

MITCH GILBERT: Can Bawa explain to us the relationship between the story that Bawa tells of creation[1] and the light that emerges when man goes through an intense self-discovery? I mean as man examines who he is, and sees those inner qualities, and then inquires, "What is that light and where does it come from?" What is the relationship between man's self-discovery and the story of creation—of how God was alone in darkness and discovered Himself?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Regarding the difference between the two—between that which emerges from God and brings bliss, and that which emerges from the mind and brings bliss—there is only one point. The bliss that emerges from God has a special beauty.

Now, as soon as a flower blooms, a beauty and fragrance emanate from it. This beauty and fragrance and freshness inherent within the flower belong to God and come from God. That is the beauty of God.

However, that which emerges from us—from our mind, from our intellect, from book knowledge—may appear beautiful and may seem to produce peace and tranquillity, but it is an illusory beauty, subject to change. It is transitory. At one moment it may seem to give some happiness, but at the next moment, that can change. Just as a child goes through changes as he progresses from infancy to adulthood to old age, the happiness that comes from the mind goes through changes. Eventually, it circles around to begin all over again.

This is the difference between the two. That which comes from God never changes, it remains eternally fresh and new, while that which comes from the mind and intellect only gives an appearance of tranquillity, peace, and equanimity—but what is it really? It is like a pleasant dream, which gives a person pleasurable feelings as

1. See *A Song of Muhammad* (ﷺ) by M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, Chapter One.

long as the dream lasts, but as soon as he awakens, the feeling is gone.

This is the difference between the beauty that comes from man's mind and the beauty that comes from God. God's beauty is unchanging and eternal, while the bliss and peace we feel from our mind lasts only for a short period. Like a dream, it is gone when we wake.

MITCH: I am not sure my question was clear. Bawa has told us the story of creation—of God being alone in darkness, of the whole process of examining that produced that first effulgent light, and then of the questioning of that light. Does something similar to that occur in a human being?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Yes, it does happen. What will it be like?

There was darkness within God in the beginningless beginning, in *anāthi.* Then God developed within Himself a state of certitude, determination, and faith *(īmān).* And through the meditation which He performed in that state, He fashioned within Himself a light, a completeness. That effulgence shone within Him, radiated within Him, resonated within Him, manifested within Him, and then emerged from Him. Then He Himself questioned that *Qutbiyyat* and *Nūr* that He had formed within Himself and caused to emerge from Himself. Through that questioning of the light, He came to understand and began to discard everything—all the darkness that was contained within Himself.

We too can become like that. We too can perform that meditation, bring forth the light of the primal *Qutb* that is within us from the beginning *(āthi),* and make it grow. Then, from this, we must bring forth the *Nūr,* make that grow to its fullness, and cause it to emerge from us. That is a beauty that is completeness, a beauty that resplends.

When that is brought forth, it will give us explanations of our body—of the parts that belong to creation and relate to form. And just as God discarded all these things from Himself in accordance with His understanding, if we too, through those explanations, can eliminate them from ourselves, then we will not have anything in us that is not in God. And what is in God will be in us. The duty that is in God should be in us. The compassion of God should be in us.

Moreover, anything that is not in God should not be in us. This state must be realized and established. When it is realized, it is That, and That is He. We must make this happen. It was in such a state that God came to know Himself. As soon as He realized Himself, He came to know everything.

Similarly, when we come to realize who we are, our birth, death, appearance, and disappearance—all these will be understood. In this state the world will be gone, hell will be gone, desire will be gone, attachments, selfishness, anger, *karma,* arrogance, *māyā,* wife, children, wealth, land, cattle (possessions), hunger, aging, death, dreams, thoughts, suffering, poverty, selfishness—everything—will leave us. This is the state that Allah is in. Only after all these left Him was He in this state. If all these depart from us too, we will reach the state of man-God. Man will be in the state of God. That is possible.

This is the state man was in before creation began, in the beginningless beginning *(anāthi* before *āthi).* This was the state of the soul then. If man can regain this state, then he will have attained the nature of God. If you can do this, it will be good.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Anything else? Ask what you have to ask. Say what you have to say. Whatever purpose you have gathered here for—fulfill that purpose.

SONIA GILBERT: I wondered—in the quest for the ultimate peacefulness which does not come or go—is a human being entitled to seek situations from which he is relatively free of distress? Or should he subject himself continually to that which comes to attack his peacefulness, accepting that even though the work is harder, it should nevertheless be pursued in that fashion? What would be wisdom's understanding of this?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: When the rain falls, all the rainwater flows toward the sea. Some of the water may collect in ponds or lakes. As more rainwater continues to flow into these ponds, it pushes out the water already there, and the new water remains in its place. The water that was there earlier is very happy as it makes good its escape, saying, "I am free! I have escaped from the stench and the dirt. How

much I had to suffer! Dogs' urine, jackals' urine, cows' urine—I had to endure so much filth and smell! Now I am free from all that!" So saying, the pond water runs toward the vast ocean.

On the other hand, the dry earth feels very happy and comforted as it soaks up the rainwater. It goes on drinking and drinking that water, until finally, when it cannot drink any more, it turns into muddy sludge, filled with decaying leaves and debris. Earlier, people could lie on that earth, cows and goats could sleep on it, but now no one can even walk on it. Its beauty is gone.

And what of the fresh rainwater that displaced the stagnant water in the pond? Worms, insects, reptiles, and odors will come into that water all too soon, and it too will lose its beauty and take on a stench. This fresh water that helped the old water to escape from its suffering, soon will suffer the same fate—to become stagnant, dirty, and smelly. When it was on its way, it was joyful in anticipation, and when it first arrived it was still happy. But as it experiences being in the pond, it will begin to understand the difficulty and suffering that goes with it.

There is a Tamil story about a quarrel between two sisters—Moodēvi and Seedēvi.[2] One represents right, the other represents wrong. Now, both right and wrong must exist in this world. Darkness and light are also necessary. But even though darkness and light both have to exist in the world, neither one need suffer or cause pain to the other.

These two sisters, Moodēvi and Seedēvi, were involved in a violent argument as to who was greater. "I am the elder, so I am greater," said Moodēvi. So, one day the two went to the *Qutbiyyat* (ra)[3] who asked them, "What is the argument about? Why are you fighting?" Moodēvi said, "Am I not prettier than my sister? To all the world, I am the elder. After all, I am the one connected to *karma,* creation, and everything. So I am more beautiful, am I not?"

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2. Moodēvi is said to be the goddess of misfortune, bringing bad luck, poverty, sickness, unhappiness, and depression. Seedēvi is the goddess of fortune, bringing happiness, wealth, and health to the house where she chooses to stay.

3. *Qutbiyyat* (ra) (A) Divine analytic wisdom, the sixth level of consciousness, which explains the truth of God; *Qutb* is also a title used for the great holy men of Islam. See Glossary.

Now, since ignorance comes before wisdom, it is older. And since wisdom develops later, it is younger. In the same way, *karma* and arrogance are there before goodness develops.

The *Qutbiyyat* (ق س ه) then looked at the two and saw that they were different. And yet he had to give an answer that would not hurt either one. So he said, "Both of you are beautiful, but in order to decide between you, I need to observe you coming and going. Please walk over that way." After they walked a short distance away from him, he asked them to turn around and come toward him. Then he told Moodēvi (the elder), "You look beautiful when you are going, and you, Seedēvi, look beautiful when you are coming." So both went away happy, shaking their hips.

The meaning of this story is that it is beautiful when ignorance leaves us, and it is beautiful when wisdom and truth come to us.

Similarly, in the world, good and bad do come and go. But when our older quality of ignorance leaves us, it is both good for us and beautiful. And when truth and God's qualities come to us, it is truly beautiful. There need be no pain to either. Without hurting the older one (ignorance), you must tell it to go away from you. And without causing any pain to the younger one (wisdom), you must invite it to come to you. If you can be like this, if you can treat each one appropriately, you will be at peace.

So, whenever trouble comes toward you, you should say, "I surrender to the will of God *(tawakkul-'alallāh)."* Then it will not stay. It will go away. And when no trouble befalls you, when things are fine, you should still hand it over to God, saying, "All praise be to God *(al-hamdu lillāh)."* Then there will be no need to hold on to either. Neither will stay. Let them come and go. Once the older one goes and the younger comes, only one will be there, and there will be no fighting. Not two, only one. In that state, only God is there. The 'I' is gone. *Karma* is gone. Arrogance is gone. Illusion *(māyā)* is gone. If nothing is retained, then That will come. Once That comes, there will be no suffering, no sadness, no 'I', no differences. Only That will remain. Nothing else. That is how you have to be. If you can understand this state, there will be no bundles to tie up, no burdens to carry along, nothing to hold on to inside, nothing to show. Only That will remain.

CRISI BEUTLER: For one who wishes to know God, where does the path to God begin? And what is that path like?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The path to God is very easy. Think of a little baby—he has no world in him, no differences, no anger, no selfishness, no envy. He has nothing of that state. He shows equality toward all; he will go to everyone. He will smile at everyone. Anyone can kiss a baby. Isn't a baby like that?

A baby begins as a cell. After it takes a form and comes out, the baby acts out everything. By the time the child is three years old, he will imitate whatever both of you did earlier in your sexual play. If you were on all fours, he will imitate that. If you were on two legs, he will imitate that. Whatever state you were in—if you behaved like a cow, he will act like a cow. If you acted like a donkey, he will show you what a donkey does.

If you look with wisdom, you will be able to see the baby imitating every act you performed. Even though he did not actually see you doing these things, he has an awareness of them all. He will show the way you kissed. He will bite the nose in the same way you nibbled at the nose. He will scratch the way you scratched. The way you tickled, the way you walked, the way you lay face down or face up or on your back—he will disclose every act of yours as if in a photograph. The baby is saying, "Look at this foolishness, O world! Look at this ignorance!"

Then he will look up at the sky and smile, saying, "I used to be up there. Now I have come here." The baby will smile and talk to God and His angels and the heavenly beings. But here (in the world), he will be acting out your antics, telling God, "They did this; this is how they did it, etc." Like that, he will tell in detail the entire history of the parents, while speaking to God in his own language, "Ooom, aang, oong."

The baby will speak the language of those who come to visit you—the monkey-man, the dog-man, the cat-man—all your friends, your relatives, your neighbors, and your loved ones. He will speak all languages—the language of the birds, snakes, reptiles, jinns, fairies, and angels—trying to explain all these things to you in his own language. But all the while the baby will also be conversing with God.

He speaks God's language.

That same state must exist within us again, toward the end of our life. That baby's state, God's state, must come at the end. The original baby is God's baby, the baby that reveals and explains wisdom. Those baby qualities and actions must be there in the end. But the time in between babyhood and the end—that is hell. It is the story of the world that is in you now, and that is what the baby is trying to show you. So if, at the end, you can regain that same state of babyhood that was in you at birth, if you can regain those same qualities, then you will commune once again with God. You will embrace everyone, as a baby does, showing the same love for all without any differences. Only that infant state will earn you the right to speak with God. That is the quality we start off with, and we must end up with the same quality.

RĀBI'ATUL-'ADAWIYYAH: What is the open heart? Why does the heart have to be open? And what causes the heart to open?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Only when a rose blooms and opens will the fragrance come forth. Is that not so? Before it bloomed could you smell any fragrance? No, you could not. Could you see its beauty? No, it was only a bud. Only after it opened could its beauty and fragrance be perceived.

The innermost heart, or *qalb,* is like a flower. Even though it is there, as long as it remains a bud, you will not be able to experience its beauty, its color, or its fragrance. Only when this flower of the *qalb* blooms will you know the joy of smelling it and seeing it. Only then can its beauty, its fragrance, its truth, and the exaltedness of its state be known. These cannot be seen in the bud. That is why the *qalb*—that flower—must be opened. It has to bloom.

A flower garden is kept locked so that animals cannot get in and destroy it. Therefore we have to unlock it, go into the garden, and take care of it. We have to water the plants, feed them with fertilizer, and protect them. Like that, using the key of the wisdom of truth, we must open the flower garden of the heart and go inside. Once there, we must find out what needs to be added to help the bud grow and blossom. We must add the fertilizer of God's qualities,

God's actions, His conduct, His virtuous nature, and His love. And we must water it with God's qualities. These are the things we must give to the plant.

As we continue to perform these duties, an exquisite form will begin to bloom, and we will be able to know its fragrance. That is the flower garden of the heart. And the Guardian for this garden is 'My God!' We will be able to see the Guardian and to experience the fragrance and beauty of the flowers there. This is how the flowers must be made to bloom. This is how we must do it.

DR. K. GANESAN: Bawa talks about man merging with God. Then we can reach the state of liberation from rebirth. But Bawa has also spoken of other stations that one might attain in the after-life, such as heaven *(swarkam)* and the kingdom of heaven *(swarnapathi).* How are these stations related to one another? Is it sufficient to reach any one of these, in order to not be subject to rebirth, or are some of these stations only temporary states from which we could be born again?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If we have a state of purity within us, if the perfectly pure kingdom in which God dwells exists within us, and if we are dwelling within that state—then that is the kingdom of God. If all ninety-nine powers of God *(wilāyāt)* and His three thousand gracious attributes dwell within us, then that itself will be the kingdom of God. That place where our heart *(qalb)* is dwelling will be the kingdom of God. The very life that we are living will be the kingdom of God. We will no longer be in the kingdom of hell, which is this world, the *dunyā.* Dwelling in His kingdom means dwelling with God.

If, while dwelling in the kingdom of God, we can nurture the three thousand gracious attributes and duties (His commands) and carry out the ninety-nine actions and duties that He performs, making them flourish within us—if we can climb up step by step in that state, what we will reach is the station called *swarnapathi. Swarnapathi* is the taste of God. Every duty we perform gives us the taste of God, God's happiness, God's beauty, God's bliss. This is the taste of God. It is what is called *swarnapathi.*

The culmination of this taste is *swarkapathi.* As we go on performing Allah's duties, His actions, and His ninety-nine sovereign powers *(wilāyāt)*—that will be *swarkapathi. (Swarkam* is heaven). *Swarkapathi* means no further birth or death. Also *swarkapathi* is said to be the heaven that never perishes.

What will that state be like? When you put firewood into fire, and it has merged with the fire, what happens? The wood is then in the same state as the fire, the wood has become the fire. Similarly, when your light disappears within God's light, that state of merging with God is *swarkapathi.* Just as only fire remained (no wood), only duty remains, nothing else. No birth, no death, no appearing or disappearing, no earlier or later state. Only God is—nothing else.

DR. MOHAMED ZAHIR MARKAR: Is it possible for one who, during his lifetime, has not reached the ultimate state of being united with God and has not completely annihilated himself in God—is it possible for him to repent sufficiently at the time of his death? And will God accept his repentance, so that he could achieve a state of innocence and union with God at that time?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If we make a supplication *(du'ā')* to God at the last moment to give us a fully ripe, mature crop, it will not work. What we need to do is water the crop and fertilize it from the beginning. If we fail to tend it at the right time, but then beg of God at the very end, "Please forgive my mistakes and give me a good crop," He will not grant it. That crop cannot be full grown all of a sudden. Similarly, at the time when a man is about to die, when he is preoccupied with writing his last will and portioning out his accumulated wealth, when he is saying what he wants to give to so and so and to so and so—at that time it will be impossible to ask for pardon or to rectify his omissions.

Earlier there was so much time for the crop to be nurtured and made to thrive. He shouldn't have waited until the last moment, when he is suffering and his tears are flowing from his eyes, for at that moment he will be pleading, "O God, will You not forgive me?" and at the same time crying out, "O God, who will look after my wife?"

At that time, he will not be able to speak, for the tongue will

not be able to move and the death rattle will be in his throat as he suddenly remembers, "O God, my granddaughter is pregnant. I will not be able to see the baby with my eyes. O my God, I wasn't able to tell my people where I kept all my money. I didn't have time to distribute my wealth. I didn't tell my people who I lent money to." All these thoughts will be running about in his mind at that time. The thoughts of what he is leaving behind will keep coming, so he will not have time then to talk to God.

Just as the thoughts that come to the mind of a crazy man are thoughts about events that happened earlier, the words he speaks will be words he has spoken or heard earlier, not words about what is happening now. When a man goes crazy, he keeps talking about the past, saying things like, "So and so did this to me or that to me." He doesn't talk about the present or the future; he has no notion at all of what is to come.

Like that, in the final stage of life, at the time of the death rattle, it is the old reels that will be playing back for him. It is the things that happened in the past that he will be remembering. At that time he will not be aware enough to ask God for forgiveness. He will not remember to ask about what is to follow. Therefore, earlier on, while there is still time, he must keep on asking for forgiveness with each breath.

DR. MARKAR: I was not asking for myself, but for the sake of others.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: But it is to you I am saying this. How can the person asking the question speak on behalf of somebody else? This is a question you have to ask on your own behalf. Listen to it as though it is for you. Have you gone beyond this state? If one who has no eyes wants to give eyes to others, how can he do it?

You have to ask for forgiveness every second of your life—every breath, every moment. For this moment say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh* (All praise be to God)," and for the next moment say, *"Tawakkul-'alallāh* (I place my trust entirely in God)." Try to establish this state, at least from now on—every one of you. Whatever happens to you at each moment, whether favorable or not, say, *"Shakūr* (I am content). *Al-hamdu lillāh."* There is no need for us to worry about what is going to happen in the next moment. We only need say, *"Tawakkul-'alallāh*

(It is His will and His responsibility)." God is in charge. Whatever happens comes from Him. And when that next moment comes and goes—no matter how it may turn out—we must thank God with contentment, and praise Him saying, *"Al-hamdu lillāh!"*

From this moment on, if each one of you will do it in this way, all your sins will be erased and taken from you, and you will be in the presence of God. He Himself has accepted all responsibility for you. He Himself is doing every one of your duties. He is the One who is acting for you. We have to hand it all over to Him. This is the repentance *(taubah)* you are thinking might be done at the last moment. This is true prayer. This is the supplication we have to make to Him.

Like that, my child, all the doctors and all the presidents in the Fellowship, all their children, and all the children in the world—every one of us needs to establish within us the state that hands over responsibility to the One who created us, the One who brought us here and protects us here. It is He who will summon us back and deliver judgment. If each of us can establish this state, we will never have sorrow or distress or suffering or agitation. Everything happens according to His will. He makes everything happen. We must reflect on this.

DR. MARKAR: The reason I asked this was that I was remembering a murderer who was stabbed and dying and was brought to the hospital, where his dying declaration was, "I no longer want anything. Please leave me alone. I want only the love of God. Please let me die in peace." And with those words he died.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You saw him die and you thought his death was peaceful. That is all you observed.

It could be that a man who has performed good actions and given endless charity may suffer before his death, while a man who has committed many murders may have a peaceful, easy death. How does God bring about the death of a person who has given charity? It could be that He might make him suffer. A person who has performed meditation, penance, and prayers might have to suffer before he dies. What could be the reason? It could be that for the duty he still must do God wants to strengthen his determination and certitude, to find out, "Is his faith steadfast? Will he abide with

Me, or will he give in to his suffering and stray from Me? Will he forget Me because of the suffering, or will he remember Me in spite of it? Is he more concerned with the severity of his illness, or does he continue to look upon Me as his greater concern? Does he look upon his poverty as more important, or does he see Me as more important?" This could be the reason that God allows suffering to good people. He is the One who knows their hearts.

However, it could also be that a man who has committed many murders is stabbed and dies quickly and with ease. He is made to die as quickly as he made his victims die. God says, "In the same way that you killed, you too will die. In the same way that you murdered, you too will be murdered. But after that, the torment you must suffer awaits you over there."

It is not possible to judge whether a man is good or bad merely by observing the manner in which he dies. Only one who can see his true state can know. And the one who knows will also realize that what is happening is God's doing.

Consider this. One man dies of a sudden heart attack. Another man is walking along the road and suddenly drops dead. This is not sufficient information for us to declare that those people were good people [just because they died suddenly, without any suffering]. Judging good and evil is Allah's responsibility. He alone knows. He alone understands. Judgment rests with Him alone.

Further, it is up to each person to make such a judgment within himself. Others have no way of judging this. Just because a man gave the appearance of peacefulness at the time of his death, it does not necessarily mean that he was good.

Do you have any more questions? Are you angry that I said this? Anybody else?

ARTHUR HOCHBERG: In his book *The Golden Words of a Sufi Sheikh,* Bawa lists a variety of 'worthless things'. One example is a man who, although he has faith and certitude, has no determination. So, a man with faith and certitude but no determination has been called a 'worthless being'. I wonder if Bawa could talk about this.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Faith is what makes the tree grow. Certitude is what makes the tree strong. Determination is what makes

the roots grow deeper and deeper. All three must be developed to the right state. Otherwise, when gales and storms strike the tree, when heavy rains fall, when earthquakes occur, when hardships, difficulties, and disease come, the tree may be uprooted and topple. The tree will no longer be of any benefit.

Like that, in the *qalb,* the innermost heart, unless certitude, determination, and faith in God—all three—are present, the many different hardships that may assail us in this world can topple us. But if we can stand firm in the face of poverty, or any gale or storm or hardship that might attack us—as long as those three are strong, we will remain unshaken and untroubled. The tree that stands firm will flower, bear fruit, and bring comfort to many. Everyone can derive much benefit from it.

But if such a state is lacking in man's *qalb,* he will be toppled by one hardship or another. If anyone says something to him that he doesn't like, he will be toppled. If satan tempts him by some scene, or if someone tells him about an upsetting drama or story, or if someone shows him one of those advertisements that are no more than camouflaged calling cards for hell, or even if someone offers him some money, he will be uprooted and overturned. Any one of these can sway him and topple him over, right into hell.

Unless he has strong faith, certitude, and determination, his life will not likely be of much benefit. His devotion to God will not be productive. His learning will not be beneficial. His worship and prayers will not be fruitful. He will not be able to attain a state in which he will be of any benefit to the world.

That may have been the meaning in the statement you read. Our faith in God must stand firm. We must believe without the slightest doubt that there is none other than He, that there is no treasure other than God. Only then will that faith be firmly established and be beneficial to us. Such faith cannot be shaken or uprooted by anything—not by illusion *(māyā),* not by illness, not by wealth or property. No satan can come and upset us. No miracles can overturn our faith. If we hand over all responsibility to Him, the Almighty One, we will not be upset by anything or anyone. So I may have said that in order to encourage you to establish that state firmly within yourselves. It is up to you to think and decide what you must strengthen—which crop you must fertilize.

ABDUL JABBAR TOOMEY: Bawa was just talking about the judgment and the fact that we have to make this judgment within ourselves before we die. When God gives a judgment, He dispenses it with justice, whether it involves punishment or otherwise. How should we dispense justice within ourselves—by punishment or other means?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You do not have to mete out punishment.

When you are bringing up a child, you must decide what is right and what is wrong in the child's actions. Isn't that so? You do have to teach the child about right and wrong. At times, you may have to speak to the child firmly and say, "Don't do that. Be good." Sometimes you may even need to shake a cane, to make the child listen. By one means or another you must teach him what is right. That is judgment.

Within us we have a zoo. There we raise four hundred trillion, ten thousand animal forms, one for each of our qualities. We also have a museum where we keep the fossils of these animals within us and display them outwardly, saying proudly, "This is our ancestry. This is the elephant-man. This is the cat-man. This is the whale. This is the bear. This is the man who was our king. This is the monkey-man, the tiger-man, the buffalo-man, the snake-man. These are our forefathers." They tell the story of our heritage, and we display that story in the museum of our body.

In the zoo within us are battalions of animal qualities that we nurture. But for every animal we are bringing up inside, there is a whip or a stick or something that can control it. By using that whip or stick, we must control each animal, harness its nature, then train it and bring it to a good place. We have to assess the state each one is in, and then take that animal to its respective station—the horse to one place, the elephant to another, the cat to yet another, the snake to another. We must keep them apart, so they cannot bite or poison one another or cause pain or suffering to one another or even murder each other.

We must exercise judgment regarding every one of our qualities, giving each one its own place, just as God, in His kingdom, keeps

all of them caged in their rightful places. Then there will be no further story to be written. There will be no blame, hence no need for inquiry or for punishment. If the questioning and the judgment have already been attended to here, there will be no further questions to be asked there, and when we reach the place of judgment, we will be told, "No inquiry is required, and there is no judgment. This is your path. You can go directly to your place." Then we will be sent at once to our rightful place, our kingdom.

Therefore, we must bring about the judgment ourselves. The way to do that is to acquire God's qualities and let Him do the judging here and now. It is God's qualities that must judge. It is God's duty that must judge. It is God—God's state—that must make the judgment. You yourself are not qualified to judge. It is He who must do the judging while you are here. When you become He, and He becomes you and gives a judgment, that will be a correct judgment.

If we can do this, it will be good. Whether it is done there or here, judgment is the same.

DAVID FREUDBERG: Within most of us—within many, many people there is a yearning for peace. What is that yearning? What is it inside us that is searching and seeking?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: That is a very good question. There is a fragrance that comes from a flower, is there not? There is a taste in a fruit, is there not? There is a light in the eye, is there not? Similarly, there is a power within man called conscience. That is the power of God. It has the taste of God.

Even though there are many different kinds of fruits, each one has a taste. And every kind of flower has a fragrance. Similarly, even though there are many different kinds of human beings, the power of God is within them all. That power is continually alerting them, explaining things to them, and making them experience things. It says, "Here is something that is necessary for you to look into. Go and search for it. Attain it. Go and experience it, go!" That is the taste and the fragrance of that power of God within you. That is the state that keeps on prompting you to search, to find comfort, and to acquire a state of peace. That is where the yearning is coming from.

DWARAKA GANESAN: If we want to concentrate on God, is it proper to concentrate on Him as a light? Not as a name, or a form, or a word, just as a light?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Everything is a light is it not, my child? My child, the question you asked is a good one. But God is not a light. Nor is He night. He is not the sun or moon. He is not a star. He is a power. God is a power. There is nothing that is like Him.

First of all you must think about what it means to concentrate on God, what it is that is called meditation. To meditate *(thiyānam)* means to eliminate from us the evil qualities—the qualities that are not in God, the qualities He discarded. Once these qualities are destroyed, it brings you peace *(shānti).* Peace brings a state of equanimity. Equanimity brings the state of tranquillity needed for you to pray. Peace, tranquillity, and the state of recognizing the equality of all lives—that is the state of *samādhi,* the state of the primal One *(Āthi)* who is God. That is the state in which we die without dying. It is not that we have died or fallen asleep, but rather that we have reached a state of *samādhi,* the same state that God is in.

To meditate is to drive away the evil qualities from ourselves, to sacrifice ourselves, to throw away all the things we gathered in our selfish state. Whatever we have within us—desire for gold, for earth, and for woman, the way we discriminate against different religions and castes, scriptures and doctrines, our blood attachments, our attachment to wife and children, to all worldly property—we need to cast them off. We need to get rid of all the things that are glued to us, all the things we desire avidly. To relinquish all these is true meditation. That state becomes meditation.

Now, whatever we focus on becomes something that we are treating as equal to God. But there is nothing equal to God. *Lā ilāha:* there is nothing equal or similar to You. *Illallāhu* (You are Allah). Anything else we put before us becomes something that takes the place of God. When we pray, there must be nothing competing with God. We must be thinking of nothing other than God.

To throw away all the things we are clinging to is meditation. To sacrifice or discard from us all the qualities that are not within

God is meditation. These are the things the world desires, so donate them to the world. The world is waiting anxiously for gold and wealth and property. So give them away. Once you have given these away, that is meditation. Give away all your evil qualities—that is meditation. That is *samādhi*. *Āthi* (God, the Eternal, Absolute) is the One who looks at all lives with equality. If you can understand this, it will be enough.

NURUL AMEENA MACAN-MARKAR: Is it possible to know Allah without the help of a true *guru,* a learned wise man?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: No, it is not possible. You really need a teacher. But if you go to a teacher who is a true man of resplendent wisdom, an *insān kāmil shaikh,* and if you take along with you a donkey and all the things that are loaded on the back of that donkey, then you cannot attain God. However, if you can unload those burdens, it becomes very easy. Otherwise you will be busy unloading and loading, over and over again, with no time for anything else. Then, even if you are with a man of wisdom, a *kāmil shaikh,* you will not derive the benefit. Is that not so?

Therefore, whatever burdens you have piled on the donkey, unload them at the very place you took them on. And then find the path to the place from which you originally came, and there join with the *shaikh.* He will guide you further. Then it will be easy. Unload those bundles quickly. After that, if you go to a wise *shaikh,* you can receive what he has to give you. That will be beneficial to you.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: No more questions? May God protect all of you. I give my love to all of my children.

June 27, 1979

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Session 2

QUESTION: Can you speak about the body?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: There are a thousand different kinds of cells in the body, moving around in the blood, in the body fluids, and in the tissues. Of these, seven kinds have been identified by science.

Out of those discovered so far, there are two main types: the red cells, which foster the growth of blood, and the white cells, which eat up the blood. This is as far as scientific research has gone.

But there are also some cells that transform water into blood and others which turn blood into milk. Still other cells transform air into a kind of gas, imbued with energy. Certain cells can create acid and fire from other cells. There are even some that can drink up the blood and others that can suck the energy of the body and blood and swallow it. Some cells transform the blood into a watery state and send more water into the nerves. Some cells turn that same water into a form that makes the blood and the water sweet and creates sugar in the body. Still other cells use that sugar to create a kind of energy that can 'melt' the body, so that no matter how much food is eaten, this energy consumes it first, thus preventing the food energy from reaching the muscles and skin, just as a tree cannot take in fertilizer if the earth absorbs it first.

Some cells take the water we drink, increase the amount, and send it out as urine. Some cells soak up the water, pull out its energy so it cannot be absorbed by the body, and send it out as semen.

Some cells melt the energy of the bone marrow and send it out through the urine, which gradually depletes the body's energy, causing it to waste away. There are other cells of a similar nature that can drain the energy from the body and bring about coughs, consumption (tuberculosis), asthma, etc. As a result, the appetite might be reduced and the strength of the body depleted. It is due to the

changes in these different cells that various diseases are produced. Thus there are many different kinds of cells—some dwelling in the warmth of the body, some in the coolness, some in the fire, and some in the water.

For the most part, only the white and red cells are easily identified. The proportion of red cells to white does not remain steady. Sometimes white cells will eat up red cells, reducing their number, while the white cells proliferate. Rarely are the amounts balanced. But whenever both red and white cells are reduced in number, it means that other kinds of cells are taking over—cells that cause the body to 'melt'. Worry can cause this. Grief, worry, or sorrow, most of all worry, can eat up a person's body. It can virtually melt the body away. We need to do more research on this in order to discover the right treatment.

NŪR SHARON MARCUS: There are times when we look at things that have occurred in our lives, and we realize that it is not through our own efforts or anything, that certain things have occurred, and we say that it is only through God's grace that such and such has happened. Could Bawa give us an explanation of what it means—what God's grace is?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: A buffalo went to the pond to drink water. A cow, which is related to the buffalo, went too. Other kinds of animals also needed water and went to drink from the same pond. Most of the animals, using their wisdom, stood on the bank and drew the water in gently, without getting their bodies or feet wet. But the buffalo plowed right into the water and stomped around in all four directions, muddying the water before it even took a drink. Now a crocodile appeared on the scene, attracted by the currents and agitation the buffalo had stirred up in the water. Soon a fight ensued between the two, and because of all the thrashing, the water became even more disturbed.

What could the buffalo say at this point? Could it say that this was God's doing? No, the crocodile came because the buffalo did not use its wisdom or transform its qualities. All the other animals used their wisdom and drank gently from the edge of the pond,

without disturbing the water. But the buffalo did not use wisdom. It went right to the middle of the pond and thrashed about, disturbing the water and thereby attracting the crocodile. Then it shouted about what followed, calling it God's will. But that danger was really brought on by the buffalo's own agitation of the water. You cannot say this disturbance was God's will.

God brought forth many creations and expected each one to use its wisdom. He gave them explanations that would enable them to act with that wisdom. Now, if we are vigilant and use our wisdom in a subtle way, but something happens despite that—something really unavoidable—that is when we are entitled to say it was God's will. Only at that point we can hold up our hands and say, "This is Your will, O God! It is beyond my capacity to deal with."

But if we forfeit our wisdom, stomp into the middle of the pond like the buffalo, disturb the water, and get caught by the crocodile, we cannot blame it on God's will. Such actions are, in fact, acts of ignorance. The danger that came to you in your life due to acts of ignorance, you cannot call God's will or God's grace. It was a result of acts stemming from a lack of wisdom.

NŪR: I was thinking more of the kind of thing like being brought to Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, being allowed to meet him in my life—the grace of God that brought me here.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: That is different. That is a wisdom matter. There are two different matters here. There is the kind of wisdom seen in the cows that stood at the edge of the pond and drank without disturbing the water. To find truth and to use that truth to save oneself from danger is also an act that stems from wisdom. But to rush in like the buffalo and become entangled in various disasters—that is an act which arises from ignorance and cannot be credited to God's will. Do you understand?

NŪR: I understand that. But I was thinking of the opposite kinds, the truly wonderful things that have happened, which we feel unworthy of. If I look back on my life....

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: This was the appropriate answer for the way the question was worded. You might have asked the question this way: When we go on searching—with perseverance and

wisdom—for a truth, what kind of benefit might we receive? The answer to that would be: It will bring you much good and take you onto the path of God. It will take you into God's realm. And that is God's grace. The benefit we receive will be in proportion to the determination and effort we put into our search. That grace will lead us into the realm of God's beauty, His wealth, and His qualities and actions. That is the reward, the benefit of such a search.

So, the one who has wisdom will stand on the bank and gently drink the water. Conducting his life in the proper manner, he will live in peace. The wisdom will help him to escape from danger and lead him to what is beneficial. On the other hand, the one that has no wisdom will wade right in and become entangled. His wisdom lost, he will find himself in danger.

Your seeking, your perseverance, your determination, your intention, your faith—will take you to whatever you are searching for. If you are searching for truth, it will take you into the realm of truth. It will cure your fatigue. That is God's grace. You can call that God's will. Whatever comforts us when we are fatigued by our search—that is God's grace.

CLAUDIA SCHULTE: I have two questions, one about myself and one that is more general. A few years ago, when I asked Bawa about making some of his stories into plays, he referred me to his book, *Maya Veeram.* We have only done a small excerpt for a puppet show. I was wondering if there was anything else Bawa would like me to do with it.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Every word spoken here has to be impressed deeply within the heart. Each word has to be deposited in the right place, in your treasury. The words spoken in that book are not words meant for a show, particularly not a puppet show. It is far better to store the words in your heart, in your treasury. If you have stored them there, you can use them to bring comfort to many children.

CLAUDIA: How can that be done?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If you place these words within you,

you will know how to use them, but if you put them into a show and try to sell them, it will not work.

AISHAH: What does it mean to give your heart to the *guru,* and how is it done?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If you have a *guru,* or teacher, you need to know—is he good or is he bad? Is he a good influence or a bad influence? You need to reflect upon this. What sort of a *guru* is he? What kind of path is he leading you onto? You need to reflect on this for a while with your wisdom.

Also you must analyze the *guru.* You must see what comes forth from him and examine it carefully. If you have any questions that need clarification, you must ask them. If you find that the answers he gives are helping you to distinguish between two ways and pointing you in the right direction, and if you find clarity thereby, then you should have faith in him and trust him. You must take his words and impress them within your innermost heart, your *qalb.*

Then you must enclose the picture of his form within the frame of your faith, certitude, and determination, and keep that image within your heart. Once you have placed the *guru* there, then everything he gives you—every word—will go directly into the treasury. Then you can ask him whenever you need to. You can look at that image within your heart and ask. If you look intently within yourself and ask, the answer will come. Explanations will come regarding both the good and the evil of something. If you have impressed the understandings of these explanations deep within you, and if the picture has been correctly placed—then he is within you and you are within him. That is surrender. When both dwell in the same place, that is surrender. At that stage, for each thing you want to know about, there will be an answer.

Everything you see is, in fact, a *guru,* a teacher, but if you hold all these inside, there will be turmoil. If all these remain within you, they will drive you crazy. So take the right one and imprint him within your heart. That will protect you. He will be the one watching over you. He will be your protector. He will be a guardian to you, a helpmate. He will be the one who accompanies you on the path, on

your journey. He will be the friend who will save you in times of danger. That is the state of giving your heart to the *guru.* Any other questions?

ANNE HOCHBERG: I have a question. Bawa has spoken of the *'arsh,* the *kursī,* and the pen. And I do not understand what the 'pen' means.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: *'Qalam'* is the Arabic word for pen. That is Allah's grace, the pen that is His wisdom of grace. It is with that pen that Allah wrote on the guarded tablet called *al-lauhul-mahfūz.* Allah loudly commanded the pen "Write!" So it wrote: *Lā ilāha illallāhu.* As soon as it had written this, it stopped writing. Then Allah commanded, "Write on, write the rest. Write: *Lā ilāha illallāhu Muhammaduw-wa Rasūlullāh.*

Thereupon, the pen, which is His grace, asked Him, "O God! *Lā ilāha:* There is nothing other than You. *Illallāh:* You are Allah. So what else can there be? I cannot comprehend what *Muhammaduw-wa Rasūlullāh* means. That is why I stopped and could not continue. *Muhammaduw-wa Rasūlullāh!* That is something I have never seen. I see only You, so I could not understand what You were talking about. That is why I stopped writing."

Then God spoke firmly and said, "That is something that is within Me. So write. It came from within Me and manifested within Me. The eighteen thousand universes and all the creations are going to be manifested out of that. That is My Messenger. I am going to send that as My Messenger for all the eighteen thousand universes. Therefore, write!" Allah commanded. And so it was written. *Lā ilāha illallāhu Muhammaduw-wa Rasūlullāh:* There is nothing equal to Him.

"Wa Rasūl: It is absolutely the final one. There are no more after it. There is nothing else equal to it. It is unique and stands alone, by itself. It has nothing else associated with it. It is something that is within Me," said Allah. *Lā ilāha illallāhu Muhammaduw-wa Rasūlullāh.*

This is what was written by the pen, which is the wisdom of grace, on the guarded tablet called *al-lauhul-mahfūz.* That is what we too must write, in our *qalb,* with wisdom, faith, certitude, and

determination. We must write our destiny, our *nasīb,* on that tablet. If the wisdom of grace dawns in us and writes this, we will become the plenitude that can talk with Allah. This is called the written destiny. It was written for us at the beginning in His presence, in His kingdom, on His throne, or *'arsh,* on the tablet called *al-lauhul-mahfūz.* This is what the pen, or *qalam,* does. This is its meaning.

June 28, 1979

Session 3

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Session 3

STEVE YASSKY: Bawa has said there have been twelve thousand Adams and Eves. I would like to know if the cycle of creation has repeated itself? If it has repeated itself twelve thousand times, does that mean that each time God has taken back into Himself all His creations and all the souls and created them anew?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It is one Adam, the same Adam (ﷺ), that God has manifested twelve thousand times, sending him as father to all the prophets, though not to the *qutbs* or saints. God has fashioned that which is called Adam and Eve (ﷺ) twelve thousand times, over and over again. The names given them may have been different. Eve (ﷺ) may have been called Hawwā', Wawammā, Hawwā' Ammā, or other names. But when we say Adam, that name actually means mankind. God fashioned Adam (ﷺ) for the purpose of bringing forth kings and prophets among mankind in order that they might demonstrate to the people that all are God's children. Every one of the prophets is a resplendent light, and there are 124,000 such lights placed as gems to form Adam's crown.

So you too are Adam, if you become Adam (ﷺ). One who has attained that state will be a true man, and he will be Adam. One who has understood who Adam (ﷺ) really is will be Adam too. Such a one will be a true man. But one who does not know who Adam (ﷺ) is, one who is not in that state, will be in the state of an animal, not a human being. That is how it is.

How many times are we born each day? How many times do we die and how many times are we born? Man dies and is reborn every second. As he gives form to each thought, he [his previous thought-form] dies and is reborn into the new thought. Each time his form changes. At one time he is born as a snake, at another time as a dog, at another time as a fox, or as any of the four-legged animals. He keeps changing his form from moment to moment, day after day.

He takes one form, dies, is then reborn as another, and so it goes on. Thus, every day, a man has numerous births and deaths. His thoughts make him die and be reborn.

Any other questions?

NŪR SHARON MARCUS: Could Bawa say something about the structure, contents, and limits of the eighteen thousand universes?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The twelve openings in your body constitute twelve universes. Within each of those there are many more universes. And so many universes exist within the five elements of earth, fire, water, air, and ether. Even within mind and desire there exist countless universes. In all, there are eighteen thousand universes. Arrogance, *karma, māyā* (illusion); *tārahan, singhan, sūran* (the three sons of *māyā);* desire, anger, miserliness, infatuation, fanaticism, and envy; intoxicants, lust, theft, murder, and falsehood—these constitute seventeen universes. The eighteenth is the realm of the powers of God's dominion, the station of the *'arsh,* the throne of God.

If you open each one of these universes and look within—as you go on opening and looking—you will find a thousand universes, each containing a thousand energies *(sakthis)* or miracles. There are millions upon millions of them. They are the *karmic* connections that bind us.

If one can understand the seeds of the eighteen thousand universes and overcome all these *karmas,* he will come to know the eighteenth universe—the state of God's divine rule. That is just one point, one letter *(alif),* one dot *(nuqtah),* which remains with Allah. Everything is contained within that one. Only when a man has conquered or understood all the other universes can he go to that eighteenth one—the one he is not aware of now.

You must come to understand the place out of which you came when you were born. You must also understand fecal arrogance (the anus). You must understand the navel—the poisonous qualities. You must understand each of the seven openings that are above [two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and the mouth]. You must know the *'arsh* and the *kursī.*[1] These make up the twelve openings. You must understand them.

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1. *'arsh* (A) The throne of God on the crown of the head. See Glossary.
kursī (A) The eye of wisdom in the center of the forehead. See Glossary.

After that you must understand the five qualities—earth, fire, water, air, and ether. That makes seventeen. Within each of these seventeen, how many universes there are! As we open out each one we will find many, many universes of illusion, many hells within. If we can understand the seventeen, we can understand what lies beyond. We can come to know the one point. That is what we have to understand.

DANA M. HAYNE: I told my son the stories of the prophets as Bawa has told us, the ones that I know. But I'm ignorant of the history of many of the prophets. Should I be telling him the Bible stories, or where can I find accurate stories?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Search for them in the Qur'an. Read the English translation. Twenty-five of them have been mentioned directly. But others have been mentioned as the 'son of so and so, who is son of so and so'.

QUESTIONER: Bawangal speaks about *insān-Allāh.* This being, this creation, at certain times throughout his life, is a target for satanic energies that destroy him and his energies. Now, if this human being also encounters a *qutb* or a prophet, the *qutb's* goal is also to destroy that human being's *karma* at the same time. At the final point, when 'Izrā'īl (ﷺ), the Angel of Death, comes, neither the *qutb* nor satan can stop that action.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The Qur'an explains this. The meaning of what you are saying is already there.

QUESTIONER: If that *insān-Allāh* (man-God) looks outside to find Allah, that is idol worship, or *shirk.*[2] If he looks inside, at himself, to see Allah, he will be in idol worship too.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: As long as the 'I' feeling exists, that certainly is idol worship, or *shirk.* Then he is not *insān,* or true man. As long as the duality exists, as long as both he and the world continue to exist, he is certainly in *shirk.* Only at the point when

2. *shirk* (A) To hold anything as equal to Allah.

the 'I' and the world have ceased to exist—only then is he truly *insān.* At that point, if he surrenders to that state and loses himself in it, he is *insān-Allāh,* but only if he is in perfect surrender. If you bring some water from outside and pour it into water you have kept in the house, what happens? The water you poured in and the water that was there before cannot be discerned from one another. Both are water. Similarly, whatever *tawakkul,* or surrender, came forth from Allah—the moment it is poured back into Him, the two are not separate. You cannot discern one from the other. If the state of surrender has been attained, they are not separate. But if this state does not exist, the Angel of Death ('Izrā'īl) (ﷺ) will come. As long as there are two he will come. As long as there is an outer form, a *sūrat,* he will come. If there is a mind he will come. If you are in the world, the *dunyā,* he will come. As long as you are in something other than Allah, the Angel of Death will come. Only if that seed has been destroyed will he not come.

When a flower is distilled, only the perfume remains. When the perfume has disappeared, only the fragrance remains. If the fragrance then disappears, only Allah remains. It is up to you to do the distilling and extract the fragrance. The flower lasts for but a short time. The perfume lasts longer than the flower. The fragrance lasts even longer than the perfume. And if the fragrance loses itself in the source, it can last much longer. It can last forever.

In the same way, *'ilm* (divine knowledge) and wisdom and the body have to be filtered and distilled. And if you merge what is extracted with that source, it will remain forever. Only God will be there. But as long as we hold on to the portion of us that is the body, the Angel of Death will have to come. As long as there is a manifested form, 'Izrā'īl (ﷺ) will come. As long as the form that has appeared—whether it be earth or fire or water or air or ether—as long as that remains, then 'Izrā'īl (ﷺ) can approach. But if we transcend that, 'Izrā'īl (ﷺ) will not come.

QUESTION: If that form was not created, how would Allah's qualities be expressed?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: I have explained this several times. If Allah had not created the body it would not be possible to know Allah. If He had not created hell, we could not know heaven. God

has said, "I have created. Go and learn and then come back. Go and discover My story and your story and then come back. This [world] is the school. Go there and learn. Only then will you realize who I am. Recognize My wealth, My *daulat,* in each thing that you see. Go and learn and then return. Whatever you look at, once you see Me within, you will praise Me. Nothing can be compared to Me."

As you go on learning *'ilm,* as you see each thing you will exclaim, *"Al-hamdu lillāh!* How can I praise Your wonders?" Within whatever you look at, you will see Allah. And you will praise only Allah. Go and learn in this way. This is why God has sent you.

QUESTION: He is said to be the best who can praise Himself. In the state of *Allāhu subhānahu wa ta'ālā,* what praises would He give to Himself?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Only God can praise God. You cannot praise Him. Within God there was a grace *(rahmat),* a secret treasure that He has given us as a trust *(amānah).* Only that *amānah* can praise the *amānah.* Allah has said, "I have given a treasure as a trust." Man contains that treasure entrusted to him by God. It is that treasure which must praise God. God's treasure is God, and that is what must praise Him.

God has said, "You must bring back to Me the treasure I entrusted to you. Bring back to Me what is Mine." That is what must worship Him. That is what must praise Him. That treasure is within man, within his form *(sūrat),* but man's form cannot do the praising. Only that treasure given as a trust can praise Him.

You must study *'ilm* diligently. What we have studied is not *'ilm. 'Ilm* is Allah's benevolence, and that benevolence is called *Rahmatul-'ālamīn* (the Mercy of all the universes). He is that *Rahmatul-'ālamīn.* He is the One who is *'ilm.* He is that *'ālamīn,* the One who rules everything. That is *'ilm.* That is why we say *in shā' Allāh* or *mā shā' Allāh* or *al-hamdu lillāh.* That is why these words came. It is to Him that these words apply. That is the praise of *'ilm,* the praise of the *rahmat.*

'Ilm is very deep. You need to dig deep to find it. That which came from Allah—you need to retrace to that point and see it outspread and revealed. You must churn it, reduce the seven oceans to the size of a mustard seed, bore into that mustard seed and shrink

it to the size of an atom, then bore through that atom and go beyond it. His sound will then emerge. That is the voice—Allah's voice.

To find *'ilm* you have to dig deep—not the way we have studied. Our attempts at describing it are like children's lessons. Our university and Ph.D. degrees are empty titles. Just learning to recite the thirty sections *(juz')* of the Qur'an or the ten books *(kitābs)* is not *'ilm.* People who can memorize these are called pundits or poets or *'alīms* or *maulās.* But to learn *'ilm* we must analyze and go deep inside. *'Ilm* is a vast matter.

QUESTIONER: This work—to go into the seed—only Allah can do that. None of us can do that job.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If one says he cannot do it, then he certainly cannot. But if one becomes *insān,* he can do it. It is to do this very thing that *insān* came here.

Allah has given man that grace, and if man becomes *insān* he will do it. If he becomes *insān* he will become *insān kāmil,* and if he becomes *kāmil* he will become Muhammad ﷺ, and if he becomes Muhammad ﷺ he will become the *Nūr,* and if he becomes the *Nūr* he will become the plenitude, and if he becomes the plenitude he will accomplish it. If his intention and his striving are directed toward it, he will attain it. But as long as the qualities of satan are in him, he will not be able to do it. If the qualities of Allah are in him, he will do it. Then he will become *insān* and will do it.

QUESTION: Will forgiveness dispel impurity?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It will never destroy impurity.

QUESTION: In that case, how can we get to that state?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Forgiveness cannot do that. If you ask it of me, I am not the one to forgive. I do not have the authority to grant forgiveness. It is not mine to forgive.

Allah sent the prophets. Then He sent the *qutbs* to explain what the prophets had brought, to demonstrate the path, and to teach the people *'ilm* so they could see how to correctly follow the path. It is not the role of the *qutbs* to grant forgiveness or to award heaven. They can only explain the path and give the map and the wisdom. It is up to you to follow that path. You must realize the good and

the bad. You must ask for forgiveness *(taubah),* saying, *"Al-hamdu lillāh!"*

He who is going to pronounce judgment on you, He who is providing you with nourishment, He who keeps you alive or makes you die—in His presence you must ask forgiveness for your faults. And once you ask forgiveness for each fault, you must eliminate that fault from you. Once you ask forgiveness and say, "I am guilty, I beg forgiveness," from that moment on, the fault should no longer be in you. If you persist and repeat that same fault three times, it will no longer be forgiven. You must ask for forgiveness from God. He is the One who knows. The asking must be by the one who committed the fault. You yourself must know your Lord and ask to be pardoned, and then you must avoid committing that fault again. You must make sure to not repeat the sins you are guilty of. That is forgiveness *(taubah).* This means you must go on cutting away each fault, one by one. As long as that fault is still present in you, you will not be forgiven, but as soon as it is gone from you, you will be forgiven.

If a thief keeps what he stole and denies that he has it, how can he be forgiven? If you give back what you stole to the One it belongs to and then ask for forgiveness, you will be forgiven. When it is no longer with you, that is repentance. Only then is there redemption.

A *shaikh* or a *sayyid* or Muhammad ﷺ or *Ahamad* or the *Qutb* رضي الله عنه will only teach you wisdom and show you the path. He will lift you and take you up to the path you must take. He will act as a staff or a walking stick to assist you in your journey. He will indicate the path. But you are the one who has to do it. Your legs have to do the walking and your hands must plant the staff and use it to pull yourself forward as you walk along. Your *īmān* (absolute faith) must do this. Your wisdom must apply all this correctly. Your *'ilm* must understand it. It is in this state that you must learn—that you must go on the path.

You must learn from your *shaikh,* your guide, while he is still alive. To be guided by a being who has left the world, you must first attain his state. If you want to commune with one who is no longer with us, you can do so only if you reach his state and rid yourself of all that is *shirk.* Only then can you seek his guidance on the path. Only if the 'I' has disappeared can you communicate with him. If

the 'I' is still there you cannot hear his sound and you cannot speak to him. Only if you attain his state, only if you die to the self, only if you disappear from the world *(dunyā)* can you speak to him. You cannot, in your state, speak to one who is dead, who has disappeared. But you can speak with Allah, for He is ever-living. He lives forever, without dying or disappearing.

So, you must ask from a guide while he is still alive. Ask, have the way opened for you, and go on your journey. Receive it from him while he is alive. That is what is called discipleship *(murīd).* You must find a *shaikh* who is *kāmil.* And the *shaikh* needs disciples with steadfast *īmān.* Then it will be good.

QUESTION: *Allāhu subhānahu wa ta'ālā* kept Himself as a secret. And our *shaikh,* who is an *insān kāmil,* is working at revealing that secret. How does that work?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: A good question indeed. It is a question from one who has studied *'ilm* but is lacking in wisdom.

Allah is a mystery. He dwells within all lives, supplying nourishment to all lives, manifesting within each life. He knows every life. He is observing every life. He hears every speech. He hears every thought.

But some have their ears blocked, some have their eyes closed, some have their nostrils closed, some have their hearts locked up. God is talking to them, but they have closed their ears. They close the eyes that can see Him. They bind in chains the tongue that can speak with Him.

It is to instruct people who are in this state that the *insān kāmil shaikhs* have come to say, "Open your eyes and see Him. Open your ears and hear Him. Open your nostrils, and enjoy His fragrance. Guard your tongue. Look for the path on which you will be safe. Look for God—He is there." They have come to tell mankind, "God is everywhere. Look and you will see Him. He is within the atom and within the ant and the flea. His sounds can be heard. Listen. He is there, existing as a mystery. Understand that mystery."

This is what the *kāmil shaikh* has to do. He explains, "The flower has a fragrance. Savor it. Distill and extract that fragrance and enjoy it. Within water there is electricity, air, fire, magnetism. Churn the water and extract these things. Then put them to proper use and

learn what benefits they can provide." This is what the *kāmil shaikh* tells you, so why do you think it is contradictory?

Everything you see tells the story of God. Look at it. He is outspread, filling the entire universe. So look. The only thing He lacks is a form. But He can be seen in His powers and His grace. So look. You exist in a form, but He is without form. You exist as the visible example, but He is the unseen Causal Principle. You are the sun, He is the light within the sun.

These are the things that the *kāmil shaikh* will tell you. If you understand this, you will see no contradiction. However, if you don't understand it, you will not see the connection.

QUESTIONER: When Mūsā (ﷺ), Prophet Moses, was on the mountain, *Allāhu subhānahu wa ta'ālā* told him, "You cannot see Me in the outer form."

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Do you understand that the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) met and communed directly with Allah when he went on the *Mi'rāj?* Does the Qur'an not say this?

QUESTIONER: Yes.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Do you understand from the Qur'an that the Prophet (ﷺ) did meet Him?

QUESTIONER: From the Qur'an and also from the *hadīth.*

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You accept the *hadīth,* do you not? You accept the Qur'an, do you not?

QUESTIONER: Yes.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Muhammad (ﷺ) was the son of Āminah (رضي الله عنها), was he not? You also accept that the Prophet (ﷺ) communed with Allah. So why can't you commune with Him?

Prophet Moses (ﷺ) communed with Allah on Mount Sinai. So why can't you? Moses (ﷺ) was the son of 'Imran (ﷺ). So why can't you do what he did?

QUESTIONER: *Allāhu subhānahu wa ta'ālā* says in the Qur'an that there is no Trinity. And in that sense, if we accept the inner meaning of the oneness of the Trinity, then we must accept the Hindu concept

of Krishna and the Christian concept of Jesus-God. It will be conflicting....

TRANSLATOR (Dr. Markar): What Bawangal asked you was something different. He asked if Moses (عم) did it, if Muhammad (صلعم) did it, why can't you or I do it? That is the question he posed. What you are saying is different.

QUESTIONER: I am trying to answer that question with another question.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If you have accepted Allah and *Rasūl* (صلعم) and still have questions in your mind, you have *shirk* within you. For one who accepts Allah and *Rasūl* (صلعم), nothing can be seen as an equal to Allah. There is no Lord other than Allah. This is what was told to Moses (عم) and to Muhammad (صلعم). If you had a state of *īmān* like theirs, there would be no necessity to even mention other deities. There is no need to accept anything else.

QUESTIONER: There is a big difference. Because when *Allāhu subhānahu wa ta'ālā* created *Rasūlullāh,* He sent him *Rahmatul-'ālamīn,* as His mercy to all the universes, but when He created Mūsā (عم) He said, "I created you for Myself."

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: He created everything for the same reason. He said, "I have created you in order that you may come to know My secret. I created everything for that reason—so that you may come to know yourself and to know Me. I have created you so that you may come to understand all the meanings." The meaning is not different from the way you have learned it. You must churn your *'ilm* and search inside.

Allah has said, *"Yā* Muhammad! But for you I would not have created anything." Everything in the universes has been created through the *mīm,*[3] which is Muhammad (صلعم). Everything has been created from the light which is purity. That light of purity is present as a very subtle point within every creation. Allah has placed that

3. *mīm* (A) The Arabic letter (م), which corresponds to the English consonant 'm'. In the transformed man of wisdom, *mīm* represents Muhammad (صلعم). The shape of *mīm* is like a sperm cell and from this comes the *nuqtah,* or dot, which is the form of the world.

seal of purity within each and every creation. That is why the *qurbān*[4] is done. Its purpose is to dispel the darkness, making food permissible for us to eat.

All of everything is Islam. At the time of the creation, the earth affirmed the *kalimah,*[5] fire affirmed the *kalimah,* and water, air, sun, moon—everything proclaimed the *kalimah.* It is these things that had affirmed the *kalimah* to *Nūr Muhammad* that were then joined together by Allah. So can anyone be referred to as *kāfir?*[6] All of everything that has been created is Islam, or purity.

However, satan's qualities can cover or occlude that purity. Arrogance, *karma,* the differences of 'I' and 'you', the fanaticism of racial and religious differences, lies, jealousy, use of intoxicants and drugs, treachery, scheming, separatism, backbiting, stealing, eating food that is *harām* (forbidden), murder, committing sin, fornication—these qualities hide that purity, causing people to change and turn away from the truth known as *dīn,* or purity. It was because of these qualities and actions that satan was cast away. And it was to help man discard these same qualities that Allah sent the prophets and the *qutbs.* He told them, "Satan's qualities are enshrouding the people. So go to them and help them cast away those evil qualities." One who has succeeded in eliminating such qualities from him—he is in *dīnul-Islām* (the perfect path of purity). And one who retains these qualities—he is satan.

God has given Muhammad ﷺ the name *Rahmatul-'ālamīn* (the Mercy for all the universes). At each *waqt* prayers are being performed in *sharī'at,* in *tarīqat,* in *haqīqat,* in *ma'rifat,* and in *sūfiyyat.* The Prophet ﷺ stands as *imām* in each of these, all at the same time.

Those who pray standing in the station of *sharī'at* claim that the *Rasūl* ﷺ is there, and refuse to accept that he can be found elsewhere,

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4. *qurbān* (A) Externally, it is the slaughter of animals in a prescribed way to render the flesh permissible *(halāl)* to be consumed. Inwardly, it is to cut away the animal qualities within the heart of man, thus making one's life *halāl* to be devoted to service to God. See Glossary.

5. *kalimah* (A) The affirmation of faith—*Lā ilāha illallāhu:* There is nothing other than You, O God. Only You are Allah. See Glossary.

6. *kāfir* (A) One who rejects faith in Allah; one who is ungrateful for Allah's blessings. See Glossary.

in other stations. Those who pray from the station of *tarīqat* claim that the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) is to be found only in that station and not beyond. Those who pray in the station of *haqīqat* claim that the Prophet (ﷺ) is only there and not below or above that station. And those who pray in *ma'rifat* say that he is with them, that they do not see him in the other stations.

But the one who is in Islam understands that the *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) stands as *imām* everywhere—in all stations. It is not correct to say that one view is right and the other is wrong, because each one will see the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) in accordance with the state of his own spiritual growth, relative to his own particular level of wisdom. And it is in that state that he will stand behind the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) and fold his hands in worship *(takbir).*

The *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) is present in all four religions, in all four steps—*Zabūr, Jabrāt, Injīl,* and *Furqān.*[7] In the section which is the world, the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) is present as the [letter] *mīm,* or Muhammad (ﷺ); he is present in Adam (ع). The section of fire (the religion of Zoroastrianism) contains the jinns, which were created out of fire. They, too, accept the Prophet (ﷺ) and pray standing behind him. And in *haqīqat* the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) is united with God and is leading the prayer, standing as *imām* for the angels, heavenly beings, prophets, and saints. To pray in *ma'rifat,* or *Furqān,* is to be in a state of eternal light, where there is no night and day, a state of continuous prayer called *'ibādat,* transcending the ten evils and transcending the cycle of night and day. What we are doing now is not true religion. The way people are practicing it is just a show. They are putting on a show in which they are merely actors. Only when one climbs up beyond the other steps and comes to this fourth step can it truly be called *ma'rifat,* or *Furqān.* And the next step is *sūfiyyat,* in which one speaks to Allah every second through the *dhikr.*

In every one of these stations, the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) is in front of us. But you continue to see him in only one place or station and refuse to accept that he could be in the other stations too. That is because

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7. *Zabūr, Jabrāt, Injīl,* and *Furqān* (A) The four scriptures that correspond to the four religions: Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam (also Judaism). These also correspond to the four steps of spiritual ascendance: *sharī'at, tarīqat, haqīqat,* and *ma'rifat,* leading to the ultimate step of *sūfiyyat.* See Glossary.

you can see only the station where you presently are. But his name is *Rahmatul-'ālamīn,* or the Mercy for all the universes. That means he is a treasure that belongs everywhere, yet you limit him to only one place. You claim that he was born in Mecca, that he died and was buried in Medina, that his mother was Āminah and his father was 'Abdullāh, that his uncle was Abū Tālib and his grandfather was 'Abdul-Muttalib. You say he is our *Nainār,*[8] *Muhammad Nabī* (ﷺ). You say these things and think that that is all there is to it.

Our *īmān* (faith, certitude, and determination) must be made safe. *Īmān* must be made strong and steadfast. The innermost heart, the *qalb,* must be protected.

June 29, 1979

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8. *Nainār* (T) Term of respect, accorded to one who is a true guide, one who is an exemplar in wisdom and qualities.

Session 4

Visit with a Sufi group of the Jerrahi Order from Turkey:
What are some of the similarities between Islam and other major religions?
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How can I prevent my faith from wavering?
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Session 4

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: May Allah protect us. May everything be what He wills.

My brother! What shall we speak about? Do you have anything on your mind? Is there anything you would like to talk about, you or any of the children?

SHAIKH TOSUN BAYRAK: If Bawa would be good enough—we have debated among ourselves regarding the basic similarities between Islam and other major religions. The following are a few questions we were considering earlier: Can the relating of one's dreams to the *shaikh* in the Sufi tradition be compared to the institution of confession in the Roman Catholic faith? And also, is there a parallel in the Sufi tradition to that of Judaism, in which the believer talks to Allah in an informal manner, even demanding at times, in the hope that Allah will grant his wishes? For example, one might say, "Allah! I know that You know everything, that You are aware about my existence, but sometimes I wonder if You have forgotten, so please let me know that You know!"

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If one is a Sufi, for him only Allah exists. The Sufi does not exist. The Sufi is not there. Only Allah is, and if Allah is—then there is nothing to ask for.

Allah created Adam and Eve (ﷺ) and placed them in heaven. But in order to lead Adam and Eve (ﷺ) astray, satan, using various acts of subterfuge, deceived the peacock and tricked the serpent into carrying him (in its mouth) into heaven. Once there, he took on the form of an angel, deceived Eve (ﷺ) into eating of the forbidden fruit, and thereby changed heaven into hell for them.

Now, just as Adam (ﷺ) was about to swallow the forbidden fruit Eve (ﷺ) had given him, the Angel Gabriel (ﷺ) came and pinched his throat closed, in order to stop him from swallowing it. But Eve (ﷺ)

had swallowed the fruit, and as a result, it was decreed that females will not keep any secrets. They will tell what is in their hearts, without concealing it. But in males there is the quality of pondering over things before they speak. The place where Adam's throat was constricted stands out like a knot and has come to be called the Adam's apple.

Above that knot, Allah placed the spring called *zamzam.*[1] As long as one is alive, water, which is the grace, the *rahmat,* of Allah, flows from that spring. When the water stops flowing from that spring, it signals the time of death for that individual. This is why people often keep asking for water near the time of death.

Now, while Adam and Eve (ع) were still in heaven they had no urine or feces, no lust or anger; they did not have the pride or other evil qualities of satan, the qualities of hell. Up to that point they were aware only of a body of light, the heavenly body. But the moment they ate the forbidden fruit, the beauty of that heavenly body of light disappeared and the body of hell became visible. Then they began to be aware of their nakedness, of their private parts, and they ran and hid behind some trees in order to conceal the nakedness of that body. They begged the trees to give them leaves to cover themselves, but none would agree to do so. Finally the incense tree, a creeper, agreed to lend them its leaves, but no sooner had they used them to cover their private parts than the tree realized it had acted without Allah's permission. Judging itself to be guilty, as a penance it wound itself around their hair and hauled them up and held them suspended in midair.

Then the sound of Allah came through Gabriel (ع), "O Adam! You ate of the forbidden fruit without My permission. Therefore, you are banished to the hell called the world. You have no place in heaven any longer. If you can regain the heaven I gave you originally, you can come back, but for now you have taken on the form of satan, the body of hell. As long as you have this form, you cannot stay here."

And so Allah commanded that Adam (ع) be cast out of heaven. But Adam (ع) kept begging and begging Allah for forgiveness. He asked in the name of every prophet who was going to be born from

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1. *zamzam* (A) A well situated near the Ka'bah in Mecca. It is said to flow from the spring of abundance *(kauthar)* in paradise.

him, prophet after prophet. He asked in the name of every saint that would be born from him. But Allah paid no heed, and the angels continued dragging him out of heaven. Finally Adam (ع) pleaded, "In the name of Muhammad *Rasūl* who will be born from me, please forgive me, for his sake." Until then his body had been dragged along the ground, but now he was lifted up and made to stand upright, and then pulled along on his feet.

And so it came about that Adam (ع) was thrown to the east and Eve (ع) to the west. The peacock was banished to the north and the serpent to the south. Satan was thrown into hell. This is what happened.

Although Adam (ع) begged in the name of every prophet, Allah did not forgive him. Even when he pleaded in the name of Muhammad (صلعم), the only reprieve he was granted was to be allowed to stand up and walk.

If we think about this, we will realize that if we fail to obey the word of Allah, there is no one in this world who can grant us forgiveness. Which saint, which prophet, can possibly grant us forgiveness? Even though Adam (ع) begged in the name of every prophet, he was not forgiven.

Only when we acquire that light-form in which Allah created us—that beautiful heavenly form we had in heaven—only in that form can we see Allah. Anyone who has been deceived by satan and taken on his qualities and partaken of the prohibited *(harām)* food that satan indulges in will assume the body-form that belongs to hell. That body-form imbibes and grows on prohibited foods, contrary to the commands of Allah. Such a one has agreed to wear the clothes of hell (which are satan's qualities), and as a result, the form of light and heavenly beauty will disappear.

No matter what religion we may follow, no matter what scripture we may read, once we realize Allah's truth, we will understand the difference between right and wrong, between that which is permissible and that which is prohibited *(halāl* and *harām),* between good and evil *(khair* and *sharr),* and between the essence and the creations *(dhāt* and *sifāt).* And once we understand these, we must then exclude what is prohibited, keep what is good and discard what is evil, and cast off the things that are wrong for us (as decreed by Allah), thus making ourselves worthy of being in heaven again.

Adam (ع) was raised to the fourth heaven. [There are eight heavens.] That fourth heaven is our *qalb,* our innermost heart. Satan will climb up to that point to deceive that house of our heart, but he can go no higher. He can climb only up to that fourth level, which is the fourth heaven. From there he can practice his deceptions, instilling jealousy, envy, treachery, and deceit, cunning, divisiveness, pride, and anger into the heart, thus feeding it with disruptive forces and disunity. Satan will commit all these actions that are contrary to the laws of Allah.

God created the jinns and satan out of fire, which contains the qualities of anger, hastiness, hatred, pride, the arrogance of the 'I', jealousy, treachery, deceit, and cunning. Anyone who has the fire of anger has the quality of the jinns, of satan. Anyone who lets those fire qualities come into him, who is deceived by those qualities and accepts the food and speech of hell, will be changed into hell. He will forfeit his beauty, his light-form, and the heaven which belongs to that beauty.

But if we can clear the innermost heart by excluding satan's qualities, satan's food, and satan's actions, we will regain our original beautiful form, the form that belonged to Adam (ع), the form of light. At that stage we will have no lust, anger, miserliness, or greed. What we will see at all times will be Allah's grace, His *rahmat.* Every type of food will have seventy thousand tastes. Every fruit will have seventy thousand tastes for us. Honey will have seventy thousand sweetnesses. Flowers will emit seventy thousand fragrances. Milk will have seventy thousand different tastes. In everything we look at, we will see Allah's grace and love in limitless, bounteous ways, in that fourth heaven which is the *qalb* of man, the house of Adam (ع).

Adam (ع) was created in the world, the *dunyā,* and placed in the fourth heaven, but he disobeyed the command of Allah and paid heed to the words of satan. Anyone who disregards the word of Allah and gives ear to the word of satan creates, in that house of the heart, many millions of idols and statues. His every thought or intention turns into something he worships as an equal to Allah. Each thought becomes an idol. Each intention becomes a statue. Each yearning becomes a god in place of Allah. As long as anyone persists in such thoughts he will not be forgiven. We create these idols and statues when we take on these different states. Whether they are outer idols

and statues or inner ones, they all belong to hell. We should realize this and eliminate our satanic qualities. Thus said *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan.*[2]

Now, when Allah had satan thrown down from heaven, He also cast out the incense tree, saying, "Since you gave of your leaves and twigs without My permission, I banish you to be burnt in the world of hell. However, since you did it out of love for your father and mother, I endow you with fragrance. Let Adam's progeny enjoy that fragrance, but for it to come forth you will have to be burnt in fire and charred." This is why the children of Adam (ع) burn incense at their ceremonies. Unless it is burnt, it has no fragrance.

If we who are children of Adam (ع) can progress without being deceived by satan, if we can realize the truth and adhere to Allah's laws, our form will become a light-form, and with the beauty of that light we will regain the heaven that was decreed for us by Allah. Only when we are filled with Allah's qualities and have unwavering faith in Him will we be able to realize who we are and understand who Allah is. At that point we will see Allah, man, and heaven in the same place. That is true prayer. To meet Allah face to face, to dwell in the same heaven in which He dwells, and to worship Him—that is prayer. To live every moment in heaven, to eat the food of heaven and worship the One who resides in heaven—that is true worship.

Otherwise, no matter who offers prayers of supplication on our behalf, we will end up with the same as what was meted out to Adam (ع). We cannot look upon anything or anyone as equal to Allah, whether it be a *shaikh* or a *sayyid,* a saint or a *qutb.* Such beings can only give us the map for our path. They will reveal to us what is within our heart. They will give us the method by which we can create light within our heart. They will point out and explain to us the meaning of *Īmān-Islām* and show us the way of good and evil, of permissible and prohibited. They will show us what earns Allah's love as well as what actions stem from the ignorance belonging to

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2. *Allāhu* (A) Beautiful, undiminishing One.
ta'ālā (A) The One who exists in all lives in a state of humility and exaltedness.
Nāyan (A) Ruler; protector; sustainer.

hell. They will explain the right and the wrong in everything. They will be like a staff that supports us as we walk on our journey. They will give us a map that shows the direct path.

If you have a *shaikh,* he might take your hand and walk with you for part of the way, but there is a limit beyond which even he cannot go. Then you will have to walk on alone and find your own way, carrying the map he showed you—the qualities and actions of Allah. The *shaikh* will bring you up in the proper manner, feed you with Allah's qualities, raise you to a state worthy of Allah's love, and explain the difference between what is permissible and what is prohibited. Then, having taken you as far as he can, he will say, "My children, now I have to go back, I have more work to do, work that Allah has given me. Here is the path. From here on you must travel on your own. Go carefully."

After a time Adam (a) was taken up to the sixth heaven, which corresponds to the sixth level of wisdom, divine analytic wisdom. The six heavens represent the six levels of consciousness: perception, awareness, intellect, judgment or assessment, subtle wisdom, and divine analytic wisdom, the wisdom of the *qutbiyyat.* The *shaikh* or *sayyid* or saint or *qutb* can take you up to the sixth heaven, but from there onward you must go by yourself. Beyond there, you have to proceed alone through the seventh and eighth heavens.

At that point you will begin to hear sounds and voices. You must not be disturbed or agitated by them. If your *īmān* is steadfast, if you keep firm your faith in your *shaikh,* or *sayyid,* or saint, or *qutb,* then you will hear a voice which resembles his, instead of hearing those other sounds and voices. So, if you go on the path your *qutb* or *shaikh* mapped out for you, *Allāhu ta'ālā* will send you sounds that resemble his. You must proceed with determined faith, without any fear of the sounds you hear.

Beyond this are seventy thousand mysterious veils—angels, jinns, fairies, illumined beings—which are mixed into our body. We have to go beyond all of these before we can see Allah face to face.

So, we must find our heaven. We must give up this body of hell and find the body of light. If we can cut away the qualities that were injected into us when we were deceived by satan, if we can regain that original light body, then we can find our way back to the heaven from which we came. If we do not regain that light-form while we

are in this world we can never hope to return to heaven. Allah told Adam (ﷺ), "You can come back here only when you have regained the resplendent form I gave you. Otherwise you will remain in the form you are in now, the body of hell." We have to realize this truth. As long as we hold on to this body which belongs to hell, we will be far, far away from Allah.

Nobody can grant us forgiveness—no religion, no scripture, no doctrine—Allah alone has the power to judge. Even the *shaikh* and the archangels Jibrīl, Mīkā'īl, Isrāfīl, 'Izrā'īl, and the angels Munkar and Nakīr (may the peace of God be upon them all), can only take us to the sixth heaven. Who can climb beyond that? Only the light of Allah. That was the state of Muhammad (ﷺ) when he climbed alone, as Allah's light, beyond the sixth heaven and ascended on the *Mi'rāj*[3] to meet Allah face to face. We too must go in that same state, in the form of Muhammad *(Sūrat Muhammad),* the form of true man *(Sūratul-Insān),* the form of light *(Sūratun-Nūr),* and as *Allāh-Muhammad (Sūrat-Allāh).* This is the only form that can transcend the sixth heaven and meet Allah face to face.

Thus, from this form we are in now, we must transform ourselves into *Sūratur-Rahmān, Sūratur-Rahīm, Sūratul-Insān, Sūratul-Fātihah, Sūratur-Rasūl, Sūratun-Nūr.* Each of these different names refer to man. We must open out and understand the meaning of each *sūrat,*[4] each form. Our true form must progress through these different stages. As long as we fail to attain these stages, we will be bound to this hell-form, and no one can forgive us. This is what has been said in the Qur'an.

Twenty-eight Arabic letters combine to form our subtle body. Of these, one is the world, the *ammārah,* which is darkness. The other twenty-seven are forms that we must understand, open out, and examine.

We have to surrender ourselves to Allah's will. We do not know what is going to happen in the next moment. So we say, "*Tawakkul-*

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3. *Mi'rāj* (A) The Ascent, also referred to as the 'Night-journey' in which Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) ascended to the heavens and into the presence of Allah. See Glossary.

4. *sūrat* (A) Form. Thus we must transform ourselves into His form, the nature and qualities of *ar-Rahmān, ar-Rahīm, al-insān,* etc. See Glossary.

'alallāh (It is within the will of God)." And for this moment, for this *waqt,*[5] we say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh* (All praise is to Allah)." So, if we are still alive for this *waqt,* then we say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh,"* and for the next *waqt,* we say, "*Tawakkul-'alallāh.*" These are the two 'times' we have to act upon. In each, we must surrender to His will.

We need to remember this at every moment. This is forgiveness. This is the state we have to attain and make steadfast within us. This is *dhikr,* the remembrance of God. If we can establish this state, if we can hand over responsibility for each moment, even the moment of our death, into His hands—that is *tawakkul-'alallāh.* That is the only prayer that worships Allah without considering anything to be equal to Him. Any other form of prayer is idol-worship, the worship of things that are considered as comparable to Him. This is the word—to keep only Allah as our true faith. If we maintain this faith, Allah will be the One who sees, who hears, who knows. This will be evident to us at every moment.

In no religion can anyone grant forgiveness. Even Adam (ع), begging in the name of the *Rasūlullāh* (ص), was only granted a small respite—to be allowed to stand erect. Therefore, until we regain our light-form, until we come to partake of Allah's permissible 'foods'[6] and relish their tastes, we will continue to dwell in the form that is hell. That body will develop foul smells and fetid odors. Our blood will stink. And the food it eats will be prohibited food. All these things are in our body now. Only when these qualities are destroyed and this form is gone will we take on the form that belongs to heaven and the grace of heaven.

The *shaikh, sayyid,* saint, and *qutb* can only give us the map. They may take us up to the sixth heaven, but not beyond. We have to reflect on this. No religion, no idol, no scripture, no magic or miracle, no *sitthis* or *sakthis* can take us there. They will be an 'opposite' to Allah. Our trust in them will compete with our belief in Allah. We

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5. *waqt* (A) Time of prayer. In the religion of Islam, there are five specified *waqts* each day. But there is really only one *waqt,* the never-ending prayer of direct communication with God when one is merged with Him.

6. The use of the word 'food' is not confined to what we eat, but includes anything we choose to nurture our lives. We should seek only *halāl,* or permissible, enrichment and avoid all *harām,* or prohibited, things.

must surrender to Allah alone. He is the One who has the power to control all these energies. We must believe this. *Al-hamdu lillāh:* all praise belongs to God.

Good and evil belong to the one who has earned it. What good or evil the wife has earned cannot be shared by the husband, and what the husband has earned cannot be shared by the wife. What is earned by the *shaikh* cannot be given to a disciple, and that earned by a disciple cannot go to the *shaikh.* Allah has decreed that each one's good and evil belong to him alone. Therefore, each one of us must try to regain that resplendent form. *Al-hamdu lillāh!*

To help us escape from hell and satan, the *shaikh* must carry us over and release us from the six regions belonging to lust and sex: arrogance, *karma,* and *māyā; tārahan, singhan,* and *sūran.* Through *karma* we are connected to hell, and through *māyā* we become infatuated and fall into a state of torpor. *Tārahan* is the force one uses to return into the place of birth. *Singhan* is the arrogance, like a lion, that one displays at the time of sex. *Sūran* takes different forms, such as miracles and *sitthis.*

These six places belong to the fire of hell. Then there are six qualities that compose the kingdom of satan: lust, hatred, miserliness or greed, fanaticism, bigotry, and envy. So, these twelve qualities must be overcome.

The *shaikh* will take us across these twelve, to the sixth heaven. To go beyond that we have to take his map and go alone. Forgiveness, surrender to Allah *(tawakkul),* giving all praise to Allah alone *(al-hamdu lillāh)*—these words will be the map. You must understand their meaning and carry them with you to guide you on your journey. And through the *qutbiyyat* you can acquire the wealth of *'ilm* (divine knowledge) and the wisdom that will transform you into Muhammad, the *Nūr,* the light of Allah.

But if you want to proceed beyond the sixth heaven and go on to earn the crown, you must climb up to the seventh heaven and even the eighth, the gem-studded palace, where you will be crowned. A place will be defined for you there. You will be allotted duties and stations in Allah's kingdom. That is where you will meet Allah face to face.

SHAIKH TOSUN: We have to go back to New York. We appreciate what was given to us.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: *Al-hamdu lillāh!* (All praise and glory is to Allah alone.)

JEANNE BOARDMAN: I believe in God, but my faith wavers.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You must have firm faith in the One who does not waver, the One who created us, protects and nurtures us, and gives us our food, the One who never forgets us, even if our father and mother should forget us. In this world there are people who think, "I am the one who earns the money. I am the one who provides the food. It is not God who is doing these things. They are within my control."

Let me tell you a story, a *hadīth.* A long time ago, Prophet Solomon (ﷺ) ruled over the jinns and fairies, the animals and reptiles, and all beings on earth. *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* had bestowed upon him the title of emperor, and as the symbol of authority had given him a ring with a seal. In those days Solomon (ﷺ) reigned as emperor over everything.

Jinns, fairies, and all creations would bring him, as an offering, a share of everything that grew in the world. They would give him a portion of whatever they had earned or gathered. The Prophet Solomon (ﷺ) accumulated all of this and thus gained a great deal of respect and authority because of his affluence.

One day Solomon (ﷺ) requested of *Allāhu ta 'ālā Nāyan,* "O my Lord! O my Creator! I have accumulated vast amounts of food. Please give me permission to feed all the creatures in the world for six months."

But Allah replied, "O Solomon! It is true that I made you ruler of the world. But I am the sovereign Lord over everything. I alone can feed the lives I have created. No one else can do this. Creating, protecting, nourishing, and judging—these duties are Mine alone. O Solomon! You are depending on all the food you have stacked up, but that is just like hay. It is useless, nothing but chaff. The real food is with Me. I alone possess the nourishment that suffices."

Still Solomon (ﷺ) pleaded, "O Allah! Look at these mountains upon mountains of food. I have to give it away. So please give me permission to feed the lives for at least one month."

But Allah answered, "O Solomon! You cannot feed My creations.

Only the One who created them can feed them. I have multiplied everything in the world a hundred thousand times merely to satisfy the greed and desire of the people in the world. What appears to you to be food is only food for one's desires *(nafs ammārah).* None but I can really feed My creations. That true food is in My keeping. As soon as the portion that has been decreed for each creation is used up, that life cannot remain in the world any longer. This agreement governs every life. The real food and water is in My hands—the water of My grace and the permissible food that truly nourishes. I have not given these into anyone else's charge. They are Mine alone to give." So said Allah.

But Solomon (ﷺ) continued to beg for permission to feed the creations, if only for a week. Again Allah answered, "Not for a week, not even for a day would you be able to feed them. I am the only One who knows the hunger, or needs, of My creations. And with that knowing I feed them at the right times and with the right amount. You do not possess that knowledge."

In spite of this Solomon (ﷺ) persisted. Finally God said, "In order to make you realize what you are asking for, I will let you attempt to feed the creatures of the ocean for just one time."

Prophet Solomon (ﷺ) joyfully accepted, and summoning all the jinns and fairies, directed them to prepare the food. They cooked the food and piled it up in huge mountains, each one as high as the Himalayas. There were also mountains and mountains of uncooked food. The jinns and fairies were still gathering food and bringing it in, but so much food was piled up that the entire earth was covered, and there was no room left.

Then Solomon (ﷺ) went to the shore, clapped his hands, and called out, "Come, O fish! Come O creations of the ocean! I have obtained permission from Allah to feed you this one meal today. Come and eat the food I have prepared for you."

One fish appeared with its mouth open wide. When it struck the water with its huge tail and fins, the water splashed fifty miles high into the sky. Then it opened its jaws even wider and thundered, "Aaaaaii! I am hungry! I am thirsty! O Solomon, son of David! Give me food!" The whole sky trembled.

Solomon (ﷺ) immediately commanded the jinns and fairies to feed the fish. They kept pouring food in, but the fish still bellowed,

"Give me more! What you gave was only the size of a mustard seed to me!" Then the fish opened its mouth and with a roar sucked in every bit of the food that had been piled up, both cooked and uncooked. It even swallowed most of the jinns and fairies. Except for Solomon (ع) and a few jinns and fairies who escaped, everything had gone into the fish's stomach. But still the fish roared, "O Solomon, son of David! I am hungry! I am thirsty! Give me food."

Now Solomon (ع) pleaded with Allah, "O Allah! Please save me. Please control this fish's hunger. O Allah, do something!"

And Allah said, "Feed him! Feed him! After all, you were going to feed all of them for six months, weren't you? Surely you can feed one fish. Give it some food!"

"O God! All the food is gone," cried Solomon (ع). "Even the jinns and fairies have vanished."

"This is exactly what I warned you," Allah replied. "Carry on with the feeding."

"O Allah!" pleaded Solomon (ع). "There is nothing left. I am the only one here."

And once again Allah said to Solomon (ع), "I told you that I alone can feed My creations. I warned you that you could not do it, but you insisted, so feed them!"

Now the fish started beating its tail again, and the waves rose sky high. "O God! Save me," wailed Solomon (ع). "Forgive me, O Allah! It is true I rule the kingdom, but the wealth *(daulat)* and the benevolence *(rahmat)* are Yours. You are right. Whatever I have is merely hay."

Then Allah sent down just one drop of pure clear water, and one tiny particle of food, each the size of an atom, which came flying into the open mouth of the fish. The fish exclaimed, "Ahhh! *Alhamdu lillāh* (All praise be to God). O Lord who created me! You alone can satisfy my hunger. Now at last I am content," and it closed its mouth.

After this, Solomon (ع) asked, "O fish! Are you the only creature in this ocean, or are there more like you?"

"There are many, many more. I live in just one corner of the ocean. My mother has seventy thousand children. I am the smallest. And our family is just one family. There are many, many more families."

"Are you the youngest?" asked Solomon (ع).

"Yes, I am."

"But you are so big!" Solomon (ع) exclaimed.

"My next older brother is seventy thousand times bigger than I am. The next is seventy thousand times bigger than he, and so it goes through all seventy thousand children. Our mother is seventy thousand times bigger than the oldest brother and our father is seventy thousand times bigger than mother. I was sent to eat first because I am the baby."

"Al-hamdu lillāh! (Praise be to God). Are there really other families in the sea as big as yours?" asked Solomon (ع) in disbelief.

"Millions of them," said the fish as it swam away.

After this, Solomon (ع), son of David (ع), received this explanation directly from Allah, "Allah is the Creator. You must accept that He is beyond all comparison. There is nothing like Him. You must know that this is true."

Therefore, who has the real food? Only Allah. Only when that comes to you will you be satisfied and say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh* (All praise is to God)." Anything else you seek and accumulate in the world is merely garbage or chaff or straw. Allah has multiplied one into a hundred, a thousand, a millionfold for the sake of our selfish desires *(nafs),* and that still does not satisfy our hunger. The only thing that can satisfy our hunger is His grace. Just a tiny atom of that suffices. Whatever our eyes can see is but the hay of hell, hay for our desires. The real food and water is His grace. That is His *rizq.*[7] That is the only thing that can be called real food. That grace is with Him. Therefore, if you believe in Him, you will have peace. If you make steadfast your faith in Him, you will not face difficulties, because whatever happens, you will be able to say, "All praise be to God *(al-hamdu lillāh)."*

JEANNE: I have sometimes played Solomon, but I feel more like the fish.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Okay. There was a man who had been in meditation for a hundred years. But then one day, unexpectedly,

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7. *rizq* (A) The nourishment, sustenance, or livelihood provided for us by the Provider, *ar-Razzāq.* See Glossary.

he stabbed another person and that person died. So even though he had been meditating, he was a murderer and had to go to the gallows.

There was another man who had also been in meditation for a hundred years. He was like a starving bull. When he saw a young woman on the road, he suddenly grabbed her and seduced her. Despite his years of meditation, he was still guilty, wasn't he? All the meditation he had done vanished in a moment.

Now, the one who stabbed was pronounced guilty of murder, and the one who raped also had to be punished. What virtue is there in being celibate for a long time if one day you commit a crime anyway? All that benefit will be lost.

Don't cry. Use your wisdom. You have to be with good people and learn good wisdom. You must think with wisdom and go on the good, straight path. Only then will you get clarity. If you just go on an ordinary path or if you think you can learn by yourself, it will be difficult. You can't climb a mountain by yourself. You need at least a walking stick. On the path of God you can't just wander on your own like this. You need a wise person to guide you. Then you can have some peace and comfort. Please don't cry. Don't cry.

July 1, 1979

Session 5

What can be done to help today's children?

Session 5

QUESTION: I am concerned about what's happening to today's children.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Children go astray when the parents hold on to thoughts like: *my child, my family, my race, my religion.* Because of their attachments, a true sense of justice is lost. As a result of this, frustration and anger, the arrogance of 'I' and the possessiveness of 'mine' can develop in the children. So the attachments of the parents could lead to the children becoming entangled in many difficulties.

But if we can instead develop the feeling that all lives are just like our own and see that all children are our children, if we can feel the hunger of everyone as we feel our own hunger, if we can see everyone's suffering as our own suffering and their happiness as our own happiness, if we can see the life of others as our own life, if we can develop God's qualities—qualities which reflect the laws of justice—then we will show love to all lives. There will be no anger. There will be no feeling of 'my' and 'mine'.

This is how it is. The weapon we possess is the weapon that will destroy us. Some parents possess the weapon of religious bigotry, and this creates a horrible battlefield.

In days of old, there were restrictions and laws that existed in the various religions, but the words and laws of those times cannot be applied in today's scientific age. Why? People can fly around the world in twenty-four hours. They have gone beyond the moon and are flying in space. Because technology has advanced to such a state and because of the kinds of modern toys available, the children of today have developed brains that work in a very subtle way, therefore we cannot tell them the things we told the children of earlier times. Today's children want to experience each thing for themselves.

When we commit a fault, we may confide in one who is an elder,

a religious leader, a minister, or a leader of the community, and our children also may confide in them and admit their wrongdoings. But the elders to whom they are confessing these faults commit faults of their own, sometimes more serious faults than those of the children. When this happens the child will think, "I only committed one fault. But look at all his faults. He is far from pure. What's the sense of this?"

Later, when the children get together, one will tell the others, "I went to confession, but this is what happened to me." Another will add, "I went to confession too, and this is what he did to me." Then they conclude, "What's the use in believing what they tell us? It's just a bunch of lies." And, little by little, they lose their belief in God.

God is certainly real, God's qualities are real, His actions are real, His compassion, His love—everything about Him—is all true and real. The fault lies with the leaders. They are expected to conduct the work of God but instead turn it into a 'self-business', something for self gain. This is wrong. They are furthering their own desires and interests in the name of God. As a result, the children end up losing their faith in God, and begin to go along other paths, searching for God in their own ways. They become entangled in all kinds of problems and get involved with marijuana, opium, and other drugs, as well as with thieves and unscrupulous *gurus*—*gurus* who indulge in magic or sorcery, *gurus* who take many wives. Thus the children become worse than they were before.

Ultimately what happens? They go crazy and have to be put in a mental hospital or seek psychiatric treatment. Their lives are absolutely ruined. This is the state that prevails in this country today.

So, we must think about this. Parents must reflect on it. Some parents do have faith in God. But when they forget their own earlier experiences and try to teach faith to their children in the same way they were taught, their children (whose thinking has been shaped by today's technology and intellectual learning) are unable to accept it. So they abandon their faith in God, lose their love for the parents, and run away from home. The parents need to realize this, and when the children turn to them and admit to some fault they committed, the parents must be able to comfort them and strengthen their faith with the appropriate words, words they can accept—words of wisdom.

Truth will always prevail as truth. Truth is not a 'self-business'. It is not something that can be bought with money. Truth is God. God is love. We must open our hearts and give Him love, and receive it from Him with open hearts. Truth is comprised of God's qualities and duties. These things remain true for all time. If we teach this truth to our children, if we develop His qualities and act with His justice, then the children will progress. But we are not doing that, so we too are at fault. If we look carefully, we will see that what we are calling devotion or faith is actually 'self-business'. We have lost our conscience. Many who preach religion have no conscience and fail to show justice. Many parents have neither justice nor conscience in their devotion. But the children do have a conscience, so they ultimately run away.

What is it we really have? It is nothing more than attachment to our religion. We lack the wisdom that can see right from wrong. Why? Because we cling tenaciously to what we believe, in the same way that a monkey clings to whatever it has grasped. In doing this, we ignore the truth.

We are human beings. Using our wisdom, we must acquire God's qualities and act with the laws of justice. If we had done so, not a single child in this country would have gone astray. They would not have separated from their parents. They would not have ended up in mental hospitals. They would not have gotten into these predicaments and thus ruined their lives.

Nowadays there are some parents who do not like to see their children being good. They would rather see them go astray. They encourage them to use marijuana, opium, and other drugs—anything—as long as they do not seek wisdom. "Stop trying to learn this wisdom! We do not like that. Enjoy the things we do!" They prefer seeing their children ruin themselves through religious bigotry or going astray—anything but becoming good children. As a result, the most likely end is the mental hospital, where they will face great difficulties.

Parents need to understand this. Truth will prevail as truth for all time. If that truth functions within a man, his devotion will be true, unwavering devotion.

That which is false will always be false. It will change like the changing seasons. Therefore, mankind must be aware of the way

things are. The present-day wisdom that we see, the information and the on-going research available today, are making rapid strides. If we examine and understand these developments, we will see that what we used to do based on our earlier understanding is all wrong. Then the truth will manifest, and we must teach that truth to all.

In olden times we were taught that God lives in heaven. Fire and water and the sun, moon, and stars were all worshiped as gods. But now the scientists have gone to the moon and even beyond. When they got there, they did not see God and so declared that there is no God out in space. This is the kind of thinking that the world has come to today. Man's travels have led him to conclude that there is no God anywhere.

But there is something called God. That something does not belong to any particular religion or race or sect. It is not the sun or moon or stars. It is not the earth or the world. It is not something that has a form. It is a Power, a Power capable of controlling every force, every energy, every cell. Such is God, a natural Power. It is That which is forever. We must have absolute faith in That. That Power resides within man too, as a ray, as a light. We must come to see that light within us. Man must see that light within himself. And within that light he must see the Power that is Truth. If we can persevere in this way, it will be good.

My children and their parents need to think about this. You small children will become parents some day. Every one of you must think about this. Now you are young. One day you will be fathers or mothers. So each of you must reflect. If every one of you can discover the correct way to bring up your children, things will be easier. You will have peace and serenity in your lives.

God is One. We are all God's children, all brethren, all one family, God's family. There is but one God, and His kingdom is the heavenly kingdom. What we are witnessing now is the kingdom of hell. These acts and scenes are being played on the stage of the world. Each one must realize this. If we can acquire the wisdom capable of realizing this, we can help our children to grow.

My love you. We will speak again at another time.

July 3, 1979

Session 6

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Session 6

QUESTION: Bad thoughts keep coming up in me. When I recite the *kalimah* they go away, but later they come back and remain.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: All the things in the body are bad and will ooze out at every moment and keep oozing out. It is up to us to continually filter these, just as we filter water before drinking it. What is good will be found only in the filtered portion, so we need to be filtering whatever comes out at every moment. It must be filtered seven times, passing it through the seven filters within us: our feeling (perception), awareness, intellect, assessment, subtle wisdom, divine analytic wisdom, and divine luminous wisdom. These seven should be functioning at all times, because only what comes through at the very end will be clear.

The motor that powers these seven filters is faith, determination, and certitude *(īmān).* As long as these seven are a part of that motor, then whatever passes through them will come out clear. Just as our feeling and awareness are vigilant, we too have to be vigilant. Our faith, certitude, and determination must be ever watchful.

QUESTION ASKED BY A GRATERFORD PRISONER: Please ask Bawa if there are any words I can take back in my heart that will strengthen the Fellowship at Graterford.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: first of all say to them, "My brothers! The world has put us away—some of us for offenses we did commit and were found guilty of, and others for offenses that we did not actually commit but were pronounced guilty for anyway. Now all of us are grouped together in this place as guilty ones.

"If we are among the ones who did commit faults, maybe even more than one, then we must ask for forgiveness from Allah. In addition, we must erase the intentions that drove us to do what we

did, and put them out of our minds completely so we will never again commit such offenses. If we are the ones who are in fact innocent, but have been put away, we must place our trust in Allah and hand everything over to Him, as His responsibility *(tawakkul),* saying, 'O God! Please do not pass such a verdict on me ever again. Please save me from such a fate. Please keep me from suffering an experience like this again. Please bestow on me the wisdom that will make me live as a true human being.'"

Both groups must ask God in this way and those who did wrong must make a definite commitment to never again repeat those wrongs.

Secondly, tell them, "All the bad qualities within us—the obsession to strike back at someone who struck us, the quality of wanting to inflict pain on anyone who caused us pain, the quality of being bent on punishing the person responsible for our conviction—these qualities we must pluck out of us, and in their place implant the quality of patience, unfurling it as an umbrella to shield us against whatever suffering may assail us, whether it be accidents, gales, or burning heat. In this way we must try to cultivate the qualities of God and achieve a state of comfort and peace."

Thirdly, tell them, "Whatever weapon we hold in our hands with the intention of harming someone—that very weapon will one day harm us. If we wield a sword, that same sword will cut us down. If we tote a gun, that gun will shoot us. If we carry a knife, that knife will stab us. Therefore, we should not resort to using the weapons of bad qualities. The only weapon we must carry is God—His qualities, His patience *(sabūr)* and His contentment *(shakūr)."*

Fourthly, say, "We must have faith in God." Tell them that God does exist.

Bodies are subject to change. Lives change. Everything created keeps on changing. The wind and rain, the ocean, the world, religions, and castes all change and take on new forms. The sun and the moon change, bringing about the alternation of day and night. Difficulties, hardship, joy, and sorrow come and go as well. Even hunger changes. At one time you are hungry, at another time you are not. We live, we die. Death and life alternate, as do wealth and poverty. All things must change. Everything that has been created is subject to change, coming and going in cycles.

There is only one thing in man's life that never changes. That is God. Allah is the One who never diminishes, no matter how much is taken from Him. We must have faith in Him and accept Him with absolute certitude. He alone does not hurt us or cause us pain. Tell them to believe in that One. If they place their faith in God, then whatever might happen at a particular moment, whether it be a loss or gain for them, they will say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh* (All praise is to God)." If they receive something good, they must say *"Al-hamdu lillāh."* Even if they do not receive anything at all, they must still say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh,"* and have contentment, or *shakūr*.

We can know only what is happening at the present moment. What is going to happen in the next moment, we do not know. Therefore, for whatever might happen within the next hour, or on the next day, we must say, *"Tawakkul-'alallāh,* O God! That is Your responsibility. For what happened to me just now, I praise You, *al-hamdu lillāh! Shakūr*. I do not know what is going to happen in the next moment. That is in Your charge."

Tell them this is how we must conduct ourselves. We must maintain this state at every moment and hand over all responsibility to God. If we can do this, then God Himself will become the watcher, the guardian for our life and our wealth. Then we can live in peace. Please tell them this.

LISA NOVELLI: Can Bawa speak about choosing friends?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: We have to reflect on how we conduct our life. Our life is like a desert, but if we try to cross that desert by holding on to the tail of a donkey, it will drag us along or kick us with its hind legs. So do not hold on to the tail of a friend who is like a donkey. Friends like that will not help you.

Our life is also an ocean of illusion *(māyā)*. We have to cross that ocean, but it is foolish to hold on to the tail of a water buffalo to help us get to the opposite shore. A water buffalo cannot even help us across a river, because it will lie down midstream in the mud, since mud is what it really likes. Because the buffalo is accustomed to mud, it knows how to free itself, but since man is not used to mud, he may find it difficult to escape and could drown right then and there.

Therefore, never take someone like a buffalo for a friend. Such a friend is not good for you.

Our life can also be seen as a vast, dense jungle through which we must journey. This dark jungle of ignorance *(agnānam)* is inhabited by wild animals. If you want to cross it safely, it is unwise to hold on to the tail of a tiger, thinking it will protect you from those wild animals. What will the tiger do? The moment it is hungry, rather than going in search of food, it will simply turn around and gobble you up. So beware! If you hold on to friends like the tiger, you will never succeed in crossing the jungle.

One side of your life is light, the other is night. The night side is the world. Here there is intense darkness, a dark jungle of ignorance *(agnānam),* false wisdom, and illusion *(māyā).* In order to guide your life through this darkness, do not rely on a torch made of rags soaked in kerosene. A torch has its limitations. As soon as the kerosene is burnt up, the torch will go out. How much can it help you then? You will be stranded in the middle of the dark jungle, where there are wild animals who, because they live in darkness and are accustomed to the dark, see best at night. They will see you and devour you. So do not hold on to friends like the kerosene torch. Also beware of friends who live in the darkness of ignorance and illusion and see very well in that darkness.

If you want to cross this dark jungle of life, what you need to carry is the light called wisdom. It will say to you, "Now it is night and the jungle is dark. If we try to go now, we will be captured. Let us go in the light of day, the light of wisdom. That light is essential for our survival in life. If we journey in the light, we can escape from many kinds of dangers, whereas if we journey in darkness, we will be subject to countless difficulties." Do you understand? Please reflect on this a little.

There are many matters in your life that need correcting. Therefore think well and choose to walk on the good path. Choose the company of good people, people of wisdom, people who know the difference between right and wrong. Once you know the difference, you then can choose the right path.

This is all that needs to be said right now. There is no need to say any more. If you can, think about these things. You are a good child. You have to extricate yourself.

Two kinds of words can come from the tongue. One can win, the other can kill. No matter how many words may come rolling off your tongue, there are only these two kinds. Both come from the same tongue, but one is tasty, while the other is not. Even though thousands of words may be spoken, they all belong to these two kinds, one good and the other evil. One can result in murder, while the other will result in goodness and bring happiness. Either can come from the same tongue.

Therefore the tongue should be under constant control. Before evil can come to the tongue, it must be blocked and prevented from emerging. This must be done with wisdom. Before a word even reaches the tongue it must be checked, for once it rolls off the tongue, it could bring about enmity, which might even end in murder. We must hold back the bad word and replace it with a good word, a beneficial word. That will be good. You must have that control. In order to attain such control, you need wisdom. The point is, there are only two kinds of words—one leads to accidents and to hell, the other leads to heaven.

LISA: I understand. Thank you!

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: *Anbu!* (God's love be with you.)

QUESTION: What can I say to my father in Syria whom I have not seen for many years?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Please tell your father this:

"Father! The followers *(ummat)* of Muhammad *Rasūl* ﷺ are not confined to Medina or Mecca alone. They are spread out all over the world—from north to south and east to west. His followers can also be found in heaven and in the hereafter. So it would not be quite correct to say that Muhammad *Rasūl* ﷺ lived only in this world called *dunyā*. Muhammad ﷺ dwells in all three realms: *awwal, dunyā,* and *ākhirah* (the beginning of creation, this world, and the hereafter). He exists in the world, or *dunyā,* as the *dīn,* or path of purity, in *awwal* as life *(hayāt),* and in *ākhirah* as *Nūr Muhammad.* He exists in the world as *īmān* (absolute faith in the one God), in *awwal* as the soul, and in *ākhirah* as helper to his followers. So Muhammad ﷺ

can be found in all three realms.

"Therefore it is not correct to say that Muhammad (ﷺ) is not in the world, only in *ākhirah* (the hereafter), nor that he is only in *ākhirah* and not in the universe of the souls. We must think about this."

Tell him, "My father! No matter where one may be, we must remember that there is a *rasūl,* a messenger of God, there with us. No matter where one may be, Allah, the One, is there too. *Al-hamdu lillāh* (all praise belongs to Allah alone). This is the way we must think.

"My father! Allah has given these two to us—*al-hamdu lillāh* and *tawakkul-'alallāh.* For whatever is due to happen, we surrender all responsibility to Allah *(tawakkul-'alallāh).* For what has already happened, we praise Him (*al-hamdu lillāh*) and offer gratitude to Him with contentment. This is our prime duty for *Īmān-Islām.* You need not be worried about your children. No matter where we may be, we need Muhammad (ﷺ), and no matter where we may be, we need our Father. This should be the yearning in the hearts of the children. That is our state."

Tell him, "They say that Muhammad (ﷺ) was born in Mecca and died in Medina, and that this happened according to the command of Allah. Similarly, they say our destiny, our *nasīb,* is whatever it is. The Prophet (ﷺ), who was born to Āminah (رضي الله عنها), was destined to be raised by Halimah [far away from Āminah (رضي الله عنها)]. He was born in Mecca but married Khadījah (رضي الله عنها), who was from Yemen. In this way, each thing will happen according to whatever is Allah's intention and His will. Therefore, there is no need for you to feel sad about what comes to pass. All responsibility must be handed over to God. *Tawakkul-'alallāh!* The only thought I hold on to is *tawakkul-'alallāh!* This is my destiny. Even though my heart and my intention hold a love and affection for my father and mother, my destiny keeps me separate from them. I can only hand over all responsibility to the will of God. All praise is to God."

Please tell your father this. However, if it is difficult for you to say these things to him yourself, tell him that you went to Bawa Muhaiyaddeen and asked him about your father, and that he told you, "Your father's ill-health is caused mostly by sorrow. Age may be a contributory factor." My brother, tell your father what I have just

told you. "This is the reason we have accepted Allah and His *Rasūl* ﷺ. *Tawakkul-'alallāh. Al-hamdu lillāh. Shakūr.* This is what we have acquired as a result of accepting Allah and His *Rasūl* ﷺ. All praise belongs to that Almighty God, Allah." Tell your father this. Tell him this is what *nasīb* (destiny) means.

QUESTIONER: My father said, "It seems I will not see you this year or next year. And if I do not see you in this world, I'm sure we will meet in the hereafter, in *Qiyāmah."*

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Tell him this. "If there had been even as much as a mustard seed of Allah's will permitting me to visit you, I would have come. If it had been His will to let me see you, I would have been with you. But the destiny that Allah had laid down upon me is otherwise.

My father, I may have left our country, but I have never left you. Allah knows this. And that is my destiny. So, even though I am far away from my country, you have never been out of my heart. I always have love for my father. The affection and respect I have for you have never gone from my heart. My heart is always meeting you, always thinking of you. Only the lands we are in are separate. But in my heart we are not separate. And if we are not separated here, how can we be separated in the hereafter *(ākhirah)* on the Day of Reckoning *(Qiyāmah)?"* Please tell him this.

MOHAMED AJWAD MACAN-MARKAR: At a recent Islamic conference, one of the speakers said that the Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said that the world would be destroyed fourteen hundred years after his passing. According to that, the date of destruction is fast approaching. Is this report accurate?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Before the Prophet ﷺ was about to pass from this world, some of his people reported to him vivid dreams they had seen, and they asked him what these dreams meant.

One person said he had seen a tree that had grown from the beginning *(awwal)* to the hereafter *(ākhirah).* The whole tree was light-filled. Every branch and every leaf was luminous, and the fruits were filled with light, the ripe ones being especially beautiful and

resplendent. This person saw that tree being uprooted and falling down. He asked the *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) what that dream signified.

The *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) replied, "The tree might have referred to me. The lights on that tree (the leaves) could have been you, and the fruits could be my people, my *ummat.* Since the tree toppled over along with its roots, it could mean that I am going to depart from your midst and leave this world."

At this the people began to cry and wail. Then some asked him, "O *Rasūlullāh,* when will we see you again?" And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Those who have absolute faith *(īmān)* in God will see me at the balance scales, where our good and evil are measured after we die." They asked a few more questions and the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) answered them.

Then they asked, "When will the destruction of the world occur? How long will we live on after you are gone?"

And the *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) replied, *"Tawakkul-'alallāh* (It is all the will of God). My people will exist as long as the world lasts." Then they asked, "When will the world be destroyed, so that all your people may be with you once again?" And the *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) said, "That too will be according to the will of God. Only Allah knows." Then the people asked once again, "When will the world end?" Now his time was drawing very near. The Prophet (ﷺ) raised one finger, his index finger. This was the last reply he gave.

Each one interpreted this sign according to his own understanding. Some said that the world will end in one year, some said in one month, some in one week, or in a hundred years, a thousand years, or a million years. Each one gave a different meaning. While they were arguing in this manner, 'Umar ibnul-Khattāb (رضي الله عنه)[1] came and said, "That is not what was meant. What the *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) meant was Allah alone knows this state." Everyone agreed that this was the best explanation.

Thus this was the only answer that the *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) gave. He did not mention fourteen hundred years.

Another person came to the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) and related a dream in which he had seen seven lean black cows enter his garden and eat

1. 'Umar ibnul-Khattāb (رضي الله عنه) (d. 644). One of the most steadfast companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and also his father-in-law. He later became the second caliph of Islam.

up the flowers and fruits and destroy all the crops. The *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ replied, "Those cows could represent satan's qualities, the seven kinds of base desires *(nafs)* that are attached to satan. In the congregations of later times, these qualities could eat up or destroy the path of purity *(dīn)* and the resplendent *īmān* (absolute faith in God). This is what is bound to happen in the times to come. So, addressing his companions he said, "Do not give room for these animal qualities. Strengthen your *īmān."*

After hearing his replies, the people cried and begged of him, "O *Rasūlullāh!* You are going away and leaving us behind!" And he said, "I will never leave you. What I brought with me I have given over into your hands. And as long as you keep that safely with you, I will never be separated from you." And they asked, "What is that treasure?" He replied, "The Qur'an that I brought."

There are many stories *(ahādīth)* like this. I have not studied anything. I have not learned to read. Allah did not give me that ability. The *Rasūl* ﷺ was not given that ability either.

July 5, 1979

Session 7

Visit with a Sufi group of the Jerrahi Order from Turkey:

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Session 7

SHAIKH TOSUN BAYRAK: I was wondering if Bawa could tell us about the wisdom of differentiating between when to resort to *tawakkul* (surrendering all responsibility to God) and when to wage *jihād* (waging war on the path to God)?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: At every moment there should be *tawakkul,* and at every moment *jihād* (the fight) has to go on.

What does *jihād* mean? What is the fighting for? What was it that the *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ came to accomplish? Was it to fight against Abū Lahab and the people allied to him? No! Abū Lahab was his uncle. The *Rasūl* ﷺ never fought his uncle. He never fought. He never cut or killed anyone.

So just what is meant by 'fighting'? And against whom was this fighting? It was against those who opposed the Creator and His message—that Allah is One and none other is worthy of worship. The fight was against those who forgot that Allah is the One who provides nourishment for all. So, it was a war between truth and falsehood. It was not between the children of Adam عم or between the *Rasūl* ﷺ and Abū Lahab and his faction.

What the *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ possessed was truth, while what Abū Lahab possessed was satan. The only war that took place was between truth and falsehood. This was the only war. It was a war between satan's qualities (through which he caused Adam عم to separate from God and be cast out of heaven) and the qualities of Allah's truth (which enabled Adam عم to be rejoined with Allah).

Are qualities an outer or an inner thing? Is the war an outer war or an inner war? The war was between the qualities within Abū Lahab and the qualities within Allah. These two sections are found within every human being, and they are always at war with each other. This was the kind of war that took place at that time.

This war was fought to recapture Allah's kingdom and His truth

from satan. Satan had taken the worship and prayers directed toward Allah and diverted them instead to things other than Allah, creating parallels to that One who has no equal or parallel. This was the reason for the war. It was not for land, but to recapture Allah's kingdom from satan.

This war still goes on at all times—at every moment, with every breath. When we begin this war we must say, *"Tawakkul-'alallāh* (all responsibility belongs to Allah)!" and *"Al-hamdu lillāh* (all praise is to Allah alone)!" We fight this war in our hearts, on the inside, and if we can win it, there need be no fighting on the outside. This war within the heart of man is against his own qualities of envy, jealousy, and treachery. It is against his arrogance and *karma*, his differences and discriminations, and his pride that boasts, "I am great!" This is the war.

Within every human being these two sections are perpetually at war with each other. This is what the *jihād* is. Once this inner fight is completed, there will be no fighting at all on the outside. We must realize this.

For every one of the children of Adam (a) the real war is to perfect their *īmān* (absolute faith in the one God) and to triumph over satan's qualities. It is to overcome satan's magic and miracles. It is a war between heaven and hell. There is no other war.

Whatever happens in this war, whether victory or defeat, we must surrender the responsibility of the outcome to Allah. We have to firmly grasp the sword of *īmān,* of steadfast faith, and use that sword to fight within ourselves. This fight goes on forever. One who is victorious will receive the wealth, the *daulat,* of Allah, while one who loses will attain hell. We have to think about this.

Who is killing whom? Who is causing the death of another? These questions will be asked of us tomorrow. One who kills another or even so much as hurts another will have to answer for it on Judgment Day. The followers of all four schools of Islamic disciplines *(madhhabs)* will have to face judgment one day. Even the four *imāms* (Imām Shāfi'ī, Imām Mālik, Imām ibn Hanbal, and Imām Abū Hanīfah)[1] must face questioning and judgment for any innovations

1. These four men systematically developed the rules of conduct and law *(fiqh)* from the injunctions of the Qur'an and the *ahādīth.* Four different schools of thought were established after them and each has a slightly different interpretation of the practices of Islam.

(bid'ah)[2] they were responsible for. Anyone who deviates at all from the belief that there is only one God must face judgment.

Allah is the only One worthy of worship. None other than Allah has the power to do this questioning or to judge. We, the children of Adam (ﷺ), will face a day of reckoning, a day when we will be questioned about why we killed another. What should we kill instead? The qualities that incite us to murder someone. To kill these is *Īmān-Islām*. And what weapons have we been given? *Sabūr, shakūr, tawakkul,* and *al-hamdu lillāh* (inner patience, contentment, putting our trust in God, and praising God alone). These are Allah's miracles.

Has Allah killed anyone? Has Allah murdered anyone? No! He has never done anything like that. Does He kill someone who opposes Him? Does He kill someone who denies His existence? Does He favor someone who accepts His existence? No! He embraces everyone alike with love. His quality is to feed, protect, and redeem them. That is Allah's wealth and His grace. That is His miracle.

His beneficent qualities are His miracles. The duties He performs are His miracles. His ninety-nine powers *(wilāyāt)* are His miracles. Allah's three thousand gracious qualities invite the praise of His creations. His quality of deep inner patience *(sabūr)* wins people over. He embraces all His creations and calls them back unto Himself. He does not wage war or strike anyone. It is His love that Allah's creations succumb to. All lives bow to that love and compassion and tolerance and equality. These are the miracles that inspire them to surrender to Him. Each of His actions impel us to bow in reverence to Him. These are the actions belonging to His kingdom, and if we can adopt these same actions, all lives will bow to us in respect. Have you not heard how cows, goats, camels, snakes, and scorpions bowed in obeisance to the *Rasūl* (ﷺ) and spoke to him?

Did the *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) ever carry a sword and fight? No! It was his qualities that made his enemies respect him and bow to him in humility. It was his quality of patience that people surrendered to. Everyone succumbed to the delicious fragrance of musk *(kasthūri)* that emanated from him, the fragrance of Allah's qualities. All lives

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2. *bid'ah* (A) Something new; a practice or belief that was not present in Islam, as it was revealed in the Qu'ran or established by the *sunnah* (example) of the Prophet (ﷺ).

would bow to any human being who had that fragrance, anyone with the beauty of God's qualities and actions and duties. All creations, even elephants, tigers, lions, and snakes, would pay obeisance to such a one. Only satan and his qualities would oppose or try to kill him, but in the end, they too would bow to him in reverence. It is Allah's qualities that constitute His miracles. Therefore, if those qualities emerge in us, they will be our miracles, and every creation will bow to them. *Īmān-Islām* must realize this.

We must not wield the sword of war, for the very sword we carry can kill us. But if instead we carry the qualities of Allah, we will be wielding the sword of Allah's mercy. That will do the fighting all by itself, and we will not have to do any fighting.

If we reflect on this and look within, we will realize the true meaning of *jihād,* or holy war. All the fighting on the outside is brought on by the satanic qualities on the inside. Thus, if we fight within to make ourselves clear, once that inner war is over, there need be no outer war. The only war is within.

This is true *Īmān-Islām.* Everything is in Allah's *tawakkul,* His responsibility.

SHAIKH TOSUN: Sometimes people find themselves thrust into the position of leader *(amīr),* or manager, or director, and they are unprepared for this. Allah knows best, but all are God's creations, His children. Of these, there could be some who are presumably aligned with the beautiful qualities of Allah, while others may be more aligned with the qualities of satan. The *amīr,* in spite of his weakness and his humility as a *mu'min,* a true believer, still has to make decisions as to which of the qualities of Allah he must assume: whether *al-Jalāl* (the Lofty, the Majestic) or *al-Jamāl* (the Beautiful, the Friendly) or *al-Qahhār* (the Subduer) or *ar-Rahmān* (the Merciful One).

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If you hit water with a stick, the water does not feel any pain, but the stick might break or split in two.

Like this, any beating handed out by one who is lacking in *īmān* (absolute faith in God) can cause pain only to himself. He can never hurt the grace of Allah. All the beatings delivered to others by one lacking the strength of *īmān* will hurt only himself. For, as long as a man does not have the strength, the steadfastness, the beauty, the

light, and the grace of *īmān,* whatever he does can hurt only himself. Just as the stick does not hurt the water, he cannot hurt the *Rahmatul-'ālamīn* (the Mercy for all the worlds).

Who has attained to worthiness in the eyes of Allah?

(Bawa Muhaiyaddeen recites the *kalimahs* containing the names of each of the eight major prophets:)

Lā ilāha illallāhu wa innī Ādam Safiyullāh (There is nothing other than You, O God! Only You are Allah and indeed Adam is the pure one of God). None is worthy of worship except the one God, Allah. Adam (ﷺ), although he was the prophet for his time, did not come as a *rasūl,* for there was a prophet yet to come.

Lā ilāha illallāhu wa innī Nūhun-Najīyullāh (There is nothing other than You, O God! Only You are Allah and indeed Noah is the spiritual traveler of God). Noah (ﷺ) was not the final prophet; another prophet was yet to follow.

Lā ilāha illallāhu wa innī Ibrāhīm Khalīlullāh (There is nothing other than You, O God! Only You are Allah and indeed Abraham is the Friend of God). There was yet another prophet to come after Abraham (ﷺ).

Lā ilāha illallāhu wa innī Ismā'īl Dhabīhullāh (There is nothing other than You, O God! Only You are Allah and indeed Ishmael is the sacrificed of God). There would be yet another prophet after Ishmael (ﷺ).

Lā ilāha illallāhu wa innī Mūsā Kalīmullāh (There is nothing other than You, O God! Only You are Allah and indeed Moses is the word of God). There was still another prophet to come after Moses (ﷺ).

Lā ilāha illallāhu wa innī Dāwūd Khalīfatullāh (There is nothing other than You, O God! Only You are Allah and indeed David is the vice-regent of God). There was yet another prophet to come after David (ﷺ).

Lā ilāha illallāhu wa innī 'Īsā Rūhullāh (There is nothing other than You, O God! Only You are Allah and indeed Jesus is the soul of God). *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* (the Lord God Almighty) created Jesus (ﷺ) from His resplendent light as the soul. Yet there was one more prophet to come. And finally,

Lā ilāha illallāhu Muhammadur-Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam (There is nothing other than You, O God. Only You are Allah

and Muhammad is the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace). Muhammad ﷺ is the *Rasūl* ﷺ, the Messenger of Allah. Of them all, Muhammad ﷺ is the chosen Prophet. He is the *Rasūl* ﷺ for all the prophets. Thus there is but one prophet who was sent as the *Rasūl* ﷺ. This *kalimah,* as it named each prophet, spoke of yet another prophet to come.

What does it mean to call someone an *'ālim?* Who gives him that title? It was Allah who gave His *rasūls* their titles. What is meant by *rasūl?* It means a wise man. Which wise man? And what kind of wisdom was given to the *Rasūl* ﷺ?

The *Rasūl* ﷺ had no education. He did not go to school or learn how to read. So what kind of wisdom did Allah endow him with? His revelations *(wahys)* and His grace. He was given the wisdom to commune with Allah, to speak to Him and hear His sounds. That wisdom is called *'ilm,* or divine knowledge. Only one who has divine knowledge can truly be called a wise man, an *'ālim.* It is that wisdom, not the other kind of learning, which makes one an *'ālim.* Today, the ones we call *'ālims, maulawīs, 'ulamā',* or *amīrs* are just ordinary people who have been appointed to a post by us.

Only a name given by Allah is a true name. When Allah gave His commands, He knew the hearts to which He gave them. Knowing their actions, He gave them names. Knowing their conduct, He gave them duties to perform. Before bestowing any names or titles, He knew all this.

The names we give—are they real titles? Will those names exempt us from being questioned on the Day of Questioning *(Qiyāmah)?* No, they will not.

We of course can call each other by different names: Aboul'ālā, or Muhammad Rahīm, or Muhammad Sharīf, or Muhammad Karīm. We can call anyone by any of the names of Allah. But does that make that person Allah? Does that name make someone a compassionate protector *(karīm)?* No! It is merely a custom to give people these beautiful names of Allah. To do so is to follow the example, the *sunnah,* of the Prophet ﷺ. But the names that Allah gives, befitting the qualities and actions He has observed in each individual, are the real names. They are our wealth of grace.

Therefore, who are we going to call an *amīr?* And what is the meaning of *'ālim?* In Tamil *āli* means 'the deep ocean', and one who

swims in this ocean is a *mīn,* a fish. What ocean is this? The ocean of Allah's *'ilm,* His divine knowledge. Anyone who swims in this deep ocean of Allah's grace is a *mīn.* Thus, *āli-mīn.*[3]

Such a one is supported by Allah, as he swims in that ocean. He will be swimming in the form of *mīm,*[4] or Muhammad ﷺ. The Arabic letter *mīm* (م) is formed from a circle. The letter *alif* (ا) is a line, like a tail. *Alif* stands for Allah, and *mīm* for Muhammad ﷺ. The circle and the line join together to form the letter *mīm.* Thus if the *mīm* (Muhammad ﷺ), which is connected to the *alif* (Allah), were to swim in the ocean of Allah's mercy, the deep ocean of Allah's divine knowledge—that would be the *āli-mīn.* Only one who swims in that ocean can be called an *āli-mīn.*

Are we *'ālims?* Can we who swim in the *'ālam* (realm) of our base desires be called *'ālims?* We swim in the realm of the earth, the realm of sensual pleasures, and the realm of gold.[5] Can we then be called *'ālims?* No, we are not *'ālims.* We swim in arrogance. We swim in *karma.* We are born from the same place our mothers were born from, and then we grow up and make love in that place. The place we suckled and chewed on and drank milk from—that same place we called mother, we now embrace as 'my wife, my life'. Is this the ocean of divine knowledge, the ocean of *'ilm?* No! We must think about this.

There is a saying: *What you saw earlier you now desire to see again. What was it you saw earlier? And what is it you desire to see once again?* We have to understand the meaning of this with divine knowledge. What you saw when you came out at birth is what you now are eager to see again. What was it you experienced when you came out bawling into this world? Dirt, filth, shame, and the odor of blood. And now that you are here, you want to experience it again. You

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3. *āli-mīn* (T) Bawa Muhaiyaddeen puns on the Arabic word *'ālimīn.* In Tamil, *āli* means deep ocean and *mīn* is fish. *'Ālimīn* is the plural of *'ālim,* which means those who have immersed themselves in *'ilm,* or divine knowledge.

4. *mīm* (A) The Arabic letter (م) which corresponds to the English consonant 'm'. In the transformed man of wisdom, *mīm* represents Muhammad ﷺ.

5. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen frequently refers to the three desires for *mann, penn, pon,* which is Tamil for earth, woman, and gold, the interpretation being the desire for land, sensual pleasures, and wealth.

need to understand what that place is. Everyone must learn about it.

What you called mother before, you should continue to treat as mother. What you called father earlier, you should treat as father. If this quality[6] comes into you, the beauty of your countenance will develop. Any other quality belongs to satan, who ended up in the kingdom of hell because he possessed such qualities.

So who can be given the title of *amīr?* These titles we confer are not real titles. Surely this is not *'ilm*, or divine knowledge. We must become the *mīm,* which is Muhammad (ﷺ), and swim in the deep ocean of *'ilm.* Then, if we reach the shore and look at that ocean of *'ilm* and analyze it, we will realize that once we become Muhammad (ﷺ), Allah will support us, just as the *alif* helps the *mīm* to swim. We will have that tail, the *alif,* which supports the circle part of the *mīm.* That circle contains within it the eighteen thousand universes that make up this world called *dunyā.* The *alif* and the *mīm* swim together in the ocean of divine knowledge that is Allah's grace. This is what is really meant by *'ālimīn*—when Allah and Muhammad (ﷺ) swim together and come to know God's grace. We must reflect on this.

Therefore, once we reach that state, as we look at the many secrets of *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* in whatever we see, we will see only His power and His grace. The universe of His grace exists in flowers, in fruits, in bushes and shrubs, in winged creatures, in the sun, moon, and stars, even in the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, tongue, and the *qalb,* the innermost heart—in all of these. If we open this up and examine it, we will see that He is the One ruling over it all as the owner, the *Rabb,* or Lord. He is both *amīr* and slave. He is God. He is the *Rahmatul-'ālamīn,* the Grace for all the universes. He is *ar-Rahīm,* the Compassionate One. He is the Lord, the Creator. He exists as everything. Since He is everything, can any name or title belong to us? No one can give us a name or a title. Allah's name is the only name everywhere. It is Allah's wealth that exists everywhere. It is Allah's grace that exists everywhere. He alone is Master and Lord. We are merely His servants, we are not titled ones. He alone can

6. The quality of perceiving and treating females and males as you would your mothers or fathers, instead of as objects to fulfill your desires.

give us a name. We cannot give any names. If we think about this, we will understand it in our hearts. *Al-hamdu lillāh!* My love to the children.

Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm (In the name of God, the Most Merciful, Most Compassionate). We need inner patience *(sabūr).* Allah created the pot, as well as a lid for that pot. A relationship exists between the two. Allah created pairs. He created Adam and Eve (ﷺ). They are the true pair. Everything we see, however, is not a true pair. There is a partner ordained by Allah for us, in accordance with our destiny. For now, we have to live in the way a pot and a lid are related.

When we come to understand the meaning of this, we will know our *Rabb,* our Creator. And when we know our *Rabb,* we will know the mercy that is *Rahmān.* If we know the *Rahmān,* we will know the compassion that is *Rahīm.* If we know the *Rahīm,* we will know His wealth. If we know His wealth, we will know His messengers. If we know His messengers, we will know the commandments and justice He gave to them. If we know that justice, we will know Muhammad (ﷺ). If we know Muhammad (ﷺ), we will know his followers and become his followers. If we become Muhammad's followers, we will come into *Īmān-Islām.* If we know Islam, we will also know the prerequisites to Islam.

The prerequisites to Islam are patience, inner patience *(sabūr),* gratitude in contentment *(shakūr),* giving all responsibility to God *(tawakkul),* and giving all praise to God *(al-hamdu lillāh).* These are the prerequisites to *īmān* and to Islam. If one comes to understand these prerequisites, he will surrender the responsibility for everything to God and say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh,"* giving all praise to Allah for whatever may happen to him. This is our only story. If one understands this, death will not overtake him. *Al-hamdu lillāh.*

July 14, 1979

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Session 8

DAVID FREUDBERG: How can we adapt and be flexible in the world? Sometimes my mind sets up certain rules of conduct, but the situation and wisdom seem to indicate that some other conduct would be more appropriate.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It certainly is difficult. A fish lives in the ocean and spends its entire life in water. That is where it lives. If it were told to live on land, the fish would find it difficult, very difficult!

In the same way, the mind lives in the dark ocean of illusion *(māyā).*[1] That is where it spends its entire life. If you try to make the mind change, if you try to make it live outside that dark ocean, it will protest vigorously, will it not?

That ocean of illusion seems to contain water, but in fact there is no water. There are no waves, but it seems to have waves. There is no darkness, but it appears dark. There is no sun or moon, but it seems that there is a sun and a moon. There is no world there, only the illusion of a world. There is no earth (soil), but it seems as if there is earth. No fire, but there seems to be fire. No water, only what seems to be water. No air, only the illusion of air. There is no ether, no torpor, no colors—but to the mind, all these do exist. There doesn't seem to be any feeling of 'I' there, but the 'I' is present. There also does not seem to be any *karma,*[2] but *karma* and *karmic* connections do exist. Thus, everything seems real, but it is all illusion *(māyā).*

1. *māyā* (T) Illusion; the unreality of the visible world; the glitters seen in the darkness of illusion; the 105 million glitters seen in the darkness of the mind. See Glossary.

2. *karma* (T) The inherited qualities formed at the time of conception; the qualities of the essences of the five elements; the qualities of the mind. See Glossary.

This is what the ocean called illusion is like. It is within such an ocean that the mind lives, along with all the *karmic* illnesses such as desire, sin, anger, hastiness, hatred, pride, love for wealth and lands, and love for woman.[3] These are the things that provide comfort to the mind, making it laugh with joy at one time and cry in sorrow at another time.

Therefore, for this fish of the mind, which is completely absorbed in its life in the ocean of illusion, to come out of that ocean and live on land is very, very difficult indeed. Why?

Just as ocean-dwelling fish need salty water, the mind needs the brine of avarice, craving, wrath, envy, treachery, conceit, anger, the pride of 'my religion is better than yours' and 'I am different from you', intoxicants, lust, theft, murder, falsehood, haughtiness, the conceit of 'I am the greatest', the vanity of 'mine', impetuosity—all this salt is what the mind thrives on. If such qualities were not there, the mind would die, for these are the salt of life for mind and desire. It is on these that arrogance and *karma* thrive and grow. If not for these qualities, they would die. Such is the ocean in which the mind dwells.

So, if the mind were to come out of this salty ocean and live on the shore, in the perfectly pure wide open space which is wisdom, it would die. Only fresh water is available there, and the salty qualities that are food for the mind would find it hard to survive. They would die.

Therefore, if you want to come out of that salty ocean and live in the wide open space in the fresh water of the perfectly pure heart, the *qalb,* the water that has no salt and is drinkable, the water that is not subject to rebirth and will never diminish, if you want to come out and live in that fresh water and in the open space that is the wealth for all three worlds, living the life of freedom of the soul, then you need to transform yourself into God's three thousand gracious and beneficent qualities of love and compassion, qualities such as patience, inner patience *(sabūr),* contentment and gratitude *(shakūr),* surrender to the will of God *(tawakkul-'alallāh),* praising Him for whatever may happen to you *(al-hamdu lillāh),* compassion for all lives, equanimity, tolerance, sympathy, charity, considering all

3. *mann, penn, pon* (T) See footnote 5, page 89.

lives as precious as your own, feeling the suffering of others as though it were your own, feeling the joy and sorrows of others as your own, discarding the bad and taking what is good and sharing that goodness with others, and many more such qualities that dwell in God's kingdom of purity.

If the mind were willing to come out, this fresh water would nourish it. However, the salty things would have to be transformed. Those qualities would have to die. But the mind does not want to come out. It is too involved with attachments, blood ties, fanaticism of race and religion, bigotry, pride over family and caste, conceit over wealth, and love for earth, gold, and woman. Therefore, it is difficult to make it come out willingly.

With wisdom we must reflect on these things, acquire the qualities of grace, and come out of the ocean. Having come out, if we take on His qualities of grace, if we imbibe the pure water, that honey of grace, we can acquire the state of freedom of a true devotee, the state in which we never die and never are born again. Like God, imperishable, eternal, and complete, we can dwell in the kingdom of God's justice. That is the water we must drink, the water that comes from Him.

If we do not attain those qualities, it will certainly be very hard to live there. Unless the mind attains that state, it will not come out and live in the fresh water of the open space—the fish will not be able to swim there. So, using wisdom, we must, if we can, identify the qualities the mind craves in that illusory ocean, and kill them. To help wisdom do this, we have been given *īmān,* or faith, determination, and certitude. If that *īmān* is in the right state, and if you can form the state of patience, inner patience *(sabūr),* gratitude and contentment *(shakūr),* and giving all responsibility to Allah *(tawakkul-'alallāh),* then you will come out into the open space, the space of good thoughts and good intentions. Once you come to the fresh water of the open space, your earlier qualities will die. They cannot survive there. The only things that can survive there are God's qualities and God's actions. Only on that day will true wisdom dawn within you, and you will transform into true man. Only on that day will you establish a connection with the kingdom of God. Only on that day will you begin your journey to the presence of your Lord. Only then will you become one who has developed the compassion

to help the creations of God and perform your duty to them.

If one does not attain that wisdom—if he puts some of that salt water in a barrel and decides to live in that barrel, all the while claiming that he has come out of the ocean, then one day that water will dry up and become foul and putrid. Mosquitoes and worms will breed in it and bite him. These creatures dwell in that water, and they will feed on him. As a result of the diseases they produce, he will die and then return to the same place from which he was born—the salt water.

One who has wisdom will destroy whatever causes desire and come out into the open space of God's kingdom. If he takes on God's qualities, that will be fresh water, water in which he can survive. Until then, as long as he is between these two states, the qualities and actions of the ocean of *māyā* will create problems for him. But once his wisdom understands, he will eliminate those qualities. He will kill them. Only then will he acquire freedom. Only then will there be a connection to God, prayers to God, and connection and duty to the creations of God. It is then that he will perform the four kinds of service: service to God, service to the *guru* or teacher, service to the people, and service to the world.

If, however, he does not attain this state, but persists in collecting salt water in a tin and living in it, all the while claiming to have left the ocean, joy and sorrow will remain with him. Arrogance and *karma* will keep afflicting him, devouring him little by little.

But if faith, determination, and certitude develop, then wisdom will begin to grow. As wisdom develops, he will know his *guru,* or *shaikh.* And when he knows his *shaikh,* he will know what is the right food needed for his growth. When he can recognize and eat the right food, he will know the true state of God's kingdom. If he knows this state, he will know his own state and the state of his birth. If he knows his own state and the state of his birth, he will see God and know God. One who has realized this state will perform service to God, to the *guru,* to the people, and to the world. The heart of one who serves in this manner will be occupied by God alone. His heart will give room only for God—nothing else. Since the *shaikh* and the *shaikh's* Father are one, service to God will become service to the *guru.* And even though he does not see God, he can see his *shaikh.*

My children, if you can open up your hearts and give room to the *shaikh,* through that grace you will find the path to God. As long as you are not in that state of surrender, it will be like bringing salty sea water to the shore and living immersed in it. One day that salty water will kill you. Then you will have nothing to turn to—no wife, no children, no religion, scriptures or doctrines, no color differences, no race or caste. All these will forsake you. In disgust, all these will tire of you, despise you, and chase you away. Then even good qualities and true, good actions will chase you away. All the qualities of God will chase you away. Duty to God will chase you away. So, in that state, both sides will have deserted you—God's qualities and your own. The salt water of your qualities will have become putrid, smelly, and infested with worms and maggots that suck your blood. You will have to suffer this agony and die.

You must realize what you want to attain, and toward that end find a teacher, a *shaikh* who is an *insān kāmil,* a true human being, one who is capable of leading you there. First of all, that teacher, that *shaikh,* must have absolute faith in God. Secondly, you must have faith in that *shaikh.* Thirdly, you must receive with utmost care the treasures he has in his possession. It is no use trying to copy or imitate him. You should not try to become the *shaikh.* You must become a child. You must become an embryo within his heart. If you can transform yourself into an embryo, a child, within his heart and do service to him, later he will transform into an embryo and be born within your heart. As soon as he is born within your heart, if you nurture him and bring him up within you, he will become your child and guide you to the freedom of your life. Then, since God is within the *shaikh,* God will grow within you in that same place.

But as long as you do not establish that state within, as long as you do not have that steadfastness of faith, you can never hope to overcome *karma* and escape this suffering. You will never be able to free yourself of the desire for earth, gold, and woman or extricate yourself from arrogance, *karma,* and *māyā.* You will not be able to extricate yourself from *tārahan, singhan, and sūran,*[4] the place from

4. *tārahan, singhan,* and *sūran* (T) The three sexual energies that are offspring of *māyā* (illusion). See Glossary.

which you were born. You will never be able to eradicate the six evil actions of desire, anger, miserliness, infatuation, fanaticism (bigotry), and envy, or the evils of intoxicants, lust, theft, murder, and falsehood. You will not be able to escape from these states.

If you can realize this, and, with the steadfast certitude and faith of *īmān,* become an embryo within his heart, if you will enter his heart and become a seed and then grow within him as a child—as soon as that child [you] has grown to maturity, you must then make the *shaikh* into an embryo within your heart. Once he has grown from a child to maturity within you, you will no longer be there. Only he will be there. And, since God is within your *shaikh,* God will be in your heart.

Your *shaikh* (if he is a true *shaikh,* an *insān kāmil)* was originally a seed within God, with firm faith in Him. Such a one will know the state of your mind, your thoughts and intentions, and the good and bad thereof, and will do duty to God, to people, and to the world. Accordingly, he will not be merciful with your bad qualities, but will strive to cut them away. He will not approve of or condone the thoughts you hold within, but will try to impress the qualities and actions of God upon you, just as they were impressed upon him when he was as a fetus within God. None of the thoughts you bring with you or the actions you lived with in the ocean of *māyā* will find favor with him. People who have those qualities and actions and are in that state will cause pain to the *shaikh.* They will interpret right and wrong differently from what the *shaikh* teaches.

Why? They will try to project their own thoughts and intentions onto the *guru.* Such people lack the capacity to be on the path to God. They lack certitude of faith in God. They will not accept the truth of the *shaikh.* They will not understand the valuable Treasure from which the *shaikh* emerged, after having been a seed. Instead, they will try to graft onto him what they hold within themselves. But the *shaikh* will not allow that. Those things cannot enter him, for he grew as an embryo within God, within faith in God. He gave room for none but that One. He was a child only to God and grew for long years within God, acquiring His qualities and actions, experiencing them, and maturing within them. Then he made That in which he had absolute faith into an embryo within himself and nurtured it. When that embryo matured, it became That and grew

up as a resplendent light within his heart. Such a one does not dwell in the ocean of *māyā.* He dwells in the open space.

With a *shaikh* like this, if you fail to have faith and certitude in him, but try instead to feed him with your own mind-state, your ways, your arrogance and *karma* and *māyā* (the places where you dwell), if you try to feed him with your anger, rancor, love for earth, gold, and woman, your desires, greed, infatuation, fanaticism (bigotry), and envy, pride of the 'I' and conceit of 'mine', with your love for titles and position, claiming "Who is there greater than I?", with your deceit, cunning, trickery, and hypocrisy, speaking of things you have not actually seen and having thoughts and actions that can hurt others—as long as you dwell in this ocean of *māyā* and hold on to these qualities that shaped your mind—if you try to place these things in the *shaikh* and use them to assess him, you will find out that these things cannot exist within him. Only God is within your *shaikh.*

He has made only one thing an embryo within him. That something is called God. That is what has grown up within him. He makes room for only that One—not for all those things you have brought with you. That is the state he is in. His qualities are duty to God and duty to the *guru.* God is his *guru.* First he made God his *guru.* Next he made God a baby within himself. Then, making God grow within him, he brought himself to this state. In this state, he performs service to the people and to the world. Realizing what qualities you have, knowing what you need and what you do not need, and knowing what is right and what is wrong for you, he will do his duty. However, while he is doing this, you should not make the mistake of assessing his actions as right or wrong, based upon the things you have stored within you. If instead, you get rid of your qualities and make him an embryo within you, if you have faith, determination, and certitude in him and become a seed within him, you will develop within you the qualities of God and the qualities of the *shaikh.* Only then will you be able to understand him. But as long as you retain within you these things that lack wisdom, you will not place your faith in the *shaikh.* If you try to analyze him through your qualities, you will not get a clear understanding, and you will never become a fetus within the *shaikh.* Only if you become a seed within him will he later become a child within you.

If you project on to him your arrogance, your religious differences, your religious beliefs and dogmas and scriptures, the scenes you see and the thoughts and scenes portrayed by your mind, these things, which belong to the ocean of *māyā,* will lead you to four hundred trillion, ten thousand births, and finally to hell. If you want to cut away these qualities, you must, with certitude and steadfast determination, place absolute faith in the *shaikh,* for the *shaikh* alone has the medicine that can cut them away. Only if you become an embryo within him can those qualities be cut away. Then he will transform your birth. And if you then make him grow within you, that seed will become the form of light and purity. It will be a seed that cannot be consumed by earth, or fire, or air, or desire, or *māyā.* Satan will not be able to touch you. Thus you will be nurturing a form that nothing can spoil or destroy. He will make this form, which cannot be touched by anything, grow within you.

But if you fail to attain this state, the only things that will grow will be ignorance *(agnānam),* darkness, attachments, blood ties, racial bias, caste discrimination and differences, pride, envy, the conceit of the 'I', the conceit of possessing land and women, pride of position and status, worldly pride, pride in one's learning, pride in kingdoms, the haughtiness of 'mine', deceit, trickery, rancor, hatred, and anger. These qualities will not be acceptable to him. As long as you retain these qualities, faith will not develop within you. As long as you do not develop faith, certitude, and determination, you cannot become a seed within him. And only if you become a seed within him can you acquire the light form.

After that, if you want to make him a fetus within you, 'you' must die. The self and the 'I' must die. All the qualities you possess in your present state must die. Only then can you take on that other form, the *Nūr,* the form of light. He will nurture you to attain that completeness. First it was he that brought you up, but once he sees the completeness in you, you can bring him up within you. That resplendent light form, the *Nūr,* will become an embryo within you. That light will protect all the universes and all the lives in them. It will dispel the darknesses in every heart. It will drive away the ignorance from each heart. It will transform all the things that are being fostered in every heart. You will then be in a state in which you can transform the state of every heart.

This state, my brother—what is your name? David, my brother, not only you, every one of us must think about this. We cannot swim to the opposite shore with the help of the qualities we now have. We cannot reach that shore by way of the learning we have acquired. We cannot reach it using the money we have. We cannot buy God by using titles. We cannot buy God by offering gold or wealth or torpor or hypnotic fascinations. Neither the *shaikh* nor God nor God's wealth or qualities can be bought with our titles, or our position, or our scheming or trickery, or with hypocrisy or jealousy or our color. We cannot buy them with religious, racial, or caste differences. We cannot buy the *shaikh,* we cannot buy God, and we cannot buy His qualities. God does not need your property or your wealth. The only thing He needs is that which must become a seed and be nurtured within Him.

If you attain this ripe state, only then, my brother, can you dispel the sorrows of all lives. Only then will it be easy for you to achieve success. But as long as you take the responsibility upon yourself, you cannot win. Only when, with firm faith, certitude, and determination, you truly become a fetus within the *shaikh* will he make you grow a different form—not the form you now have—within him. The form he will nurture within him is the light form, the form that came in *āthi,* the primal beginning. That form does not have hell mixed into it. The understanding and learning of that form are different. Nothing can destroy it—not earth, fire, water, or gold. *Māyā* dare not touch it. Satan cannot win over it. The form the *shaikh* will nurture is one that cannot be touched by anything. It is a resplendent light form. If you remain a disciple, if you serve him with absolute faith and certitude, he will bring you up by way of that service.

Only then can you overcome all these things. Otherwise, one day or another, the qualities you have fostered within you will kill you. Your riches and wealth will kill you. Your love for women will kill you. Your desire for earth will kill you. Your desire, your envy, your vanity, your arrogance, your treachery—all these will eat you up. Deceit and trickery and hypocrisy will devour you one day. All the things you have nurtured within you—the arrogance, *karma,* and *māyā*—will consume you nerve by nerve. Piece by piece, bone by bone, blood by blood—every part of your body will be sucked out

and drained away, this body that you have looked upon as valuable and lasting.

If you foster qualities such as these within you, if you have doubts about your *guru (shaikh),* if you think you are more learned, if you get the idea that what you say is right and what he says is wrong, if you treat your ignorance as wisdom and speak from that ignorant lack of wisdom *(agnānam),* from your arrogance, *karma,* and *māyā,* if you treat these as the undiminishing wealth of God *(daulat),* if you project your ignorant thoughts onto the *shaikh,* thinking, "What he did was wrong. What I did was the action of a wise one, a great *gnāni.* I am learned and titled. I am rich and wealthy. I have university learning and have learned everything. I have a B.A. or M.A. I have learned everything there is to be learned. I am a doctor, an engineer, a scientist"—if you bring all the learning you consider valid and project it on him—you will find that the *shaikh* has examined such learning long ago and discarded it all. He treads on all this learning like a pair of slippers. If you bring your qualities and your actions, your arrogance, *karma*, evil, sin, jealousy, pride, and conceit to such a one, he will merely step on them as he does on slippers. He keeps only God in his heart. Only God's light is within him. All the learning you take pride in is what he learned long ago and threw out, trampling it underfoot. When Moses (عم) and Muhammad (صلعم) communed with God, even they wore all this as slippers. But you have not realized this state. Based on your beliefs and conclusions, you find fault with him. By doing this, you will keep acquiring more and more *karmic* connections in your life. If you slander a good person, if you ridicule a good one, if you cause pain to the heart or mind of such a person, all this will turn into the fire of hell for you. It will turn into *karmic* connections, and result in suffering and torment to you. You must reflect upon this.

Each child must think about his *shaikh* in this way. If you want to conquer *māyā*, if you want to escape from the ocean of *māyā*, you must bring all your qualities out of that ocean, out into the wide open space, and surrender to the *shaikh,* becoming a fetus within him, so he can destroy your qualities. But if instead you hold on to those qualities and your pride and conceit, and if you cause pain to him and declare that what he is doing is wrong, you will become subject to unending *karma* and suffering from which you will have

no escape. You will have to undergo suffering that will continue through a long succession of birth after birth after birth, which one day will end up as torture and agony for you. This will be the result of hurting a true heart, the heart of a good one, a *shaikh* who is a true human being, one with faith in God, one who does true duty. Such an action will boomerang onto you and cause you even greater suffering than you had intended for him. Therefore:

> Do not harbor thoughts of causing harm to another. Those thoughts will come back to harm you in much greater measure. Great suffering will come to you as a result.
>
> Do not speak unless you have realized yourself.
>
> Every word brings a fault. Each thought leaves a deep scar.
>
> If you speak without controlling your tongue, you will gather great suffering.
>
> If you speak without true awareness, your wrong intentions can cause a blemish more painful than the worst *karma*.
>
> If you cause pain to a *guru,* a good person, a person who has good thoughts and intentions, one whose heart is filled with light and good qualities, all the *karmic* taints will follow you.

God has said:

"*Yā* Muhammad! Anyone who wants to scold Me, let them do so. Whether they scold Me, or deny My existence, or ridicule Me, I am One who is forbearant and forgiving. But if anyone ridicules, or finds fault with, or causes pain or hurt to the heart of one who is My devotee, one who was born as a fetus within Me, one who was born as a child to Me—I cannot tolerate or forgive that. Forgiveness can come only from that devotee. I cannot bear such an action. They will have to ask for forgiveness directly from him. Otherwise, it will render that person liable to grievous punishment."

God's qualities and God's actions are truly of this nature. Because

of this, because of the wrongs done to prophets and other great ones, because of the actions of certain people who attacked those great ones by projecting their own qualities and actions onto them, entire countries were destroyed. Those lands were afflicted by famine and pestilence and by natural disasters such as gales and storms. This is the proof shown by God to His prophets.

Let me tell you about something that happened long ago in the city of Mecca. There was a king called Abū.[5] That king, having conquered all the lands in the region, set forth to capture Mecca as well. He came with his entire army, made up of elephants, horses, foot soldiers, archers, cannons, and forces that fought in the air. Accompanied by millions upon millions of his troops, he entered Mecca. At that time Abū Tālib[6] was in charge of the city of Mecca. King Abū, upon reaching the outskirts of the city, sent forth a challenge saying, "Who is the leader of this land? Come out and fight me. This land belongs to me." No one came out to fight him. No one was bold enough to face him. The only thing of value in Mecca at that time was the *Ka'bah,* the mosque built in the times of Prophet Abraham (ﷺ). It had been built and rebuilt during the times of various prophets. Abū threatened to destroy the building. He challenged the inhabitants of Mecca to come out and fight if they wanted to protect it. Even then no one came out. So Abū had the horses and donkeys from that area driven off. Next he captured the camels and cattle and had some of them slaughtered for meat. Still no one came forth. Abū went on challenging them, demanding that the leader of the land come out and fight. Finally he captured all the camels, horses, and cattle that belonged to Abū Tālib, and repeated his challenge.

Now Abū Tālib came out, approached the king and said, "O King! These animals you have caught are my property. I am a poor man. They are my only means of livelihood. Please return them to me." The king asked Abū Tālib, "Are you the leader of this city?"

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5. Abū: Bawa Muhaiyaddeen is referring to Abrahah, the viceroy of Abyssinia, who ruled Yemen in the sixth century and who marched against Mecca. This invasion is mentioned in *Sūrat* 105 of the Holy Qur'an, *The Elephant.*

6. Abū Tālib: Bawa Muhaiyaddeen is referring to 'Abdul-Muttalib ibn Hāshim. He was the grandfather of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and the head of the Banū Hāshim clan of the Quraish tribe.

"No! I am leader only of myself, not of the city. I am leader only of my heart." Then King Abū threatened to destroy the *Ka'bah.* Abū Tālib replied, "You are free to do as you wish. That is not my property. I own only these donkeys and camels."

"So who is in charge of this building?" "The owner is somewhere far, far away. He is God, and this building belongs to Him. Since it is His property, it is He who must protect it. That is not my duty. The only things God has given me in this world are these animals, not the *Ka'bah.* So go ahead and break it down, if that is your intention. Since it is His property, I am sure He will protect it. Let Him protect it. It is not mine.

So King Abū ordered the animals belonging to Abū Tālib to be returned to him, and said, "We will break the *Ka'bah* down." When they set out to do so, God sent down a flock of tiny birds. They descended in vast hordes, so vast that they blanketed the entire city of Mecca like dark rain clouds covering the entire sky. Each one was carrying a pebble as small as an atom, too small to be seen by the eye. And when the birds dropped those tiny pebbles, whatever spot they fell on melted. Whatever a pebble fell on melted away. The elephants and camels were all destroyed in this way. Nothing was left. Abū and all his troops perished. Only Mecca and the *Ka'bah* remained intact.

This is how Allah protects His property. Similarly, He will protect the heart of a true *shaikh,* one who is His true devotee, one whose heart is open, one who has only God in his heart, one who does duty to God, to the *guru,* to the people, and to the world. God protects all such people. But when evil qualities band together and try to batter the *Ka'bah,* that sanctuary which is the pure heart of a true devotee, a true *shaikh,* a good one—since that is the kingdom of God, the shrine where God dwells, the mosque in which one can pray to God and meditate on Him—when anyone sets out to destroy that sanctum of purity, God does His duty in this fashion. Because that place is His house, if anyone—out of jealousy, falsehood, treachery, arrogance, *karma,* and *māyā,* or out of love for earth, gold, and woman, or out of love for worldly titles, position, and learning, or from schemes and trickery, or anger and selfishness, or out of pride and conceit—if anyone has taken on satan's qualities and dwells in the ocean of *māyā,* and, driven by mind and desire, sets out to attack

the pure sanctum in which God abides, then immediately, just as God sent down those tiny birds, God will send disease and suffering to the hearts of such people. He will send down difficulties and pain to their thoughts. He will send *karmas* to their arrogance. He will cause disease in their bodies and bring trouble to their properties and possessions. And so they will perish by the very thing they nurtured within themselves. No matter how big or how strong they may be, they will be destroyed, just as the vast army of King Abū was destroyed.

Similarly, anyone who hurts the heart of a *shaikh*, a virtuous one (man or woman), a true devotee of God, one who has God's love, one who has absolute faith and trust in God, a heart of truth—anyone who sets out to crush that heart—God will mete out to him the same treatment. This is God's word. However, God may not do this immediately. God is patient. If that heart is hurt, when it begins to show signs of hurt, God will show His hand. Similarly, the *shaikh,* being a devotee of God, will bear it up patiently for a long time. But when at last he cannot bear it up any longer and gives the responsibility to God, then God will come to protect that heart. Just as Abū Tālib relied on God, when the *shaikh* offers his heart to God's protection, then God will come to protect what is His property and will punish the evil-doers.

You must realize this state. The state of the *shaikh's* heart is exactly like this. It is a kingdom of God, a throne of God's justice, an abode of God where exalted prayer is offered to God. Realizing this, we need to learn how we must conduct ourselves toward the *shaikh*. We must serve him in that way. If we cannot, we should leave and go the way our thoughts lead us, taking with us all the things we came with. If we do this, we will not be subject to difficulties.

One must not cause pain to another. Jealousy and hypocritical thoughts and speech, thoughts that seek to hurt others, will finally eat you up. My brother, it is only when these wrong thoughts and qualities depart from you and us and everyone, only then, when faith in God becomes a seed within us, will that wisdom grow in us, and we will be able to cut away our *karmas*. Only then can we attain the state of peace and tranquillity, and that seed will take root within us. My brother David, you must think about this. Only then can you bring peace to your mind.

QUESTION: Bawa, if one is trying to put his intentions in tune with that one intention for God, is it possible, in the eyes of God, to marry someone who doesn't believe in God, specifically, one who believes in Buddhism?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You are a Christian and the other person believes in Buddhism? Is that right? You have faith in God. She has faith in Buddha. Both are right. (Bawa Muhaiyaddeen chants) *Buddham sarranam katchami, dhammam sarranam katchami, sangam sarranam katchami.*

First, *buddham sarranam katchami* means: I surrender to Buddha. Second, *dhammam sarranam katchami:* I surrender to the doctrines of Buddha. I surrender my body, mind, and soul to serving the people. And third, *sangam sarranam katchami:* I surrender to the society. For unity, I surrender to each heart.

What were Buddha's qualities? He was born a prince, but he abdicated his position and titles, went out into the world, and taught the five precepts, known as the *panja-sīla*.[7] Keeping nothing for himself, Buddha practiced those five precepts. The true meaning of the first precept is that you must discard the qualities within you that hurt others. Next you must share your food and property among all lives. Give it all away and attain your freedom, do not keep anything as your own. Dedicate your heart to serving others. All creations are one society. The *panja-sīla* teaches that one must have compassion for all lives and serve to alleviate their hunger and disease. This is the unity with which these duties must be done.

In Islam, the first precept is to have absolute faith in God. The second is to pray to God, affirming that there is none worthy of worship other than Almighty God. The third is charity, to give food

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7. The five precepts are 1) to abstain from killing living beings, 2) to abstain from taking what is not given, 3) to abstain from sexual misconduct, 4) to abstain from false speech, and 5) to abstain from intoxicating drinks and drugs.

In the book *The Wisdom of Man,* Bawa Muhaiyaddeen explains that these five precepts also refer to the five elements which comprise the human body: earth, fire, water, air, and ether. With the five precepts, Buddha taught that we must purify this body. However, he himself escaped from the confines of the body to the wide open space within, from where he meditated upon God.

and clothes and distribute your own property among others. The fourth is to fast, so that by feeling the pain of your own hunger you will realize how much pain others feel in their hunger, in their poverty, and in the difficulties they undergo. Once you understand this, you will help them. That is why we are asked to fast. God gives each one his *rizq,* the food that he needs for each moment. Whatever you are given at that time is permissible, or *halāl.* Stocking up things for a later time is impermissible, or *harām.* We fast in order to realize this.

The fifth law is to go on the holy pilgrimage, the *hajj.* Before you go, you must give away all your possessions and property, as if you were going to your death. Love for earth, women, and gold must die within you. Arrogance, *karma,* and *māyā* must die. The vanity of the 'I' that sees others as different from yourself must die, as well as all discrimination between different races and colors. Having gotten rid of everything, you must dress in a white shroud, as if you were a corpse, dead to the world. You must die before your death. That means your evil qualities have to die and your possessions have to die. You must have nothing to call your own. Only then can you attain the state of God, who has no property, land, house, or possessions of His own. Then there will no longer be any connection between you and the earth. Your only connection will be with God, and you will glorify and worship Him at all times.

These are the true meanings of the five laws, or *furūd*, that God gave you to follow. These are the five laws of *sharī'at,* the external actions. In addition, there are six tenets of Islam that you must understand: belief in God, belief in the angels, belief in His scriptures, belief in the prophets, belief in the Day of Judgment, and belief that we must know the difference between what God ordained as good and evil, and follow only the good. These eleven were sent to Muhammad (ﷺ), just as the Ten Commandments were sent to Moses (عم). These are the ways we should perform our duties.

Buddha taught five precepts. If your friend attempts to follow these and become like Buddha, who left his home and gave up everything, then you can certainly marry her. However, if you have faith in God, if the world has left you, if you have given up desire for earth, women, gold, arrogance, *karma*, and *māyā* (illusion), if you have rid yourself of the three sons of *māyā* known as *tārahan, singhan,*

and *sūran,* and if all the evil qualities such as desire, anger, miserliness, attachment, fanaticism, envy, intoxicants, lust, theft, murder, and falsehood have left you, then you can marry God. If you practice the qualities and actions of God, the tolerance, the peacefulness, and the justice of God, if you have inner patience, contentment, and gratitude to God, surrendering to Him and praising Him alone, if you live your life serving others with the three thousand divine attributes of God and His ninety-nine duties or *wilāyāt,* if you practice all these and maintain good thoughts, then you can marry God. In such a state you would not marry earth, woman, or gold, or any such thing.

Both of you should think about this. If you can both live like this, then your marriage will be successful. If she gives up what she is holding onto, and you give up what you are holding onto, then both will have perfect faith. Buddha did not speak about God, but he told his followers to become true human beings and to help society, to help the people. What did Muhammad ﷺ say, in accordance with Allah's word? He said you must transform yourself into a true human being, an *insān kāmil.* Destroy the statues of arrogance, *karma, māyā,* and the other evil qualities within you. Dispel them—they are fatal to you. Accept God and truth. Accept that there is nothing worthy of worship other than God, the One who is limitless grace, incomparable love, the One who gives you the limitless wealth of His grace. God alone is your wealth. Do not keep any wealth inside you other than God. He is your body. He is your heart. He is your life. He is the light within you.

Let that be your prayer. Glorify Him at all times. Have faith and certitude in Him and glorify Him. That will be best for you. This is what Muhammad ﷺ said, according to the commands of God. We must use our wisdom, and with the perfect faith, certitude, and determination of *īmān,* disentangle ourselves from our present state. If we love Him and Him alone, then we will not need any other marriage.

Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah ؓ,[8] a female Sufi saint, also said this. One

8. Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah ؓ (713–801). One of the most famous saints in Islam. She lived in Basrah, Iraq, and her life exemplified divine love *(mahabbah)* and intimacy with God *(uns).*

day the elders of her village, the men of wisdom, having discussed the subject among themselves, told Rābi'ah (رضہ) that they thought she must get married.

Rābi'ah (رضہ) said, "If that is your intention, so be it. But there is one condition. If I am to marry, I must marry one with divine wisdom. If there is such a man, then I will marry him."

The elders talked it over and came to the decision that Hasanul-Basrī (رضہ)[9] was one of wisdom. "All right," said Rābi'ah (رضہ). "If you say he has wisdom, I will ask him four questions. If he answers them correctly, I will agree to marry him."

So everyone assembled and the elders told Hasanul-Basrī (رضہ), "You must answer these four questions correctly."

He replied, "*In shā' Allāh*, if God wills, I will answer them."

Rābi'ah's first question was, "Everyone in the world has to die at one time or another, do they not? So, when I die, will I die a true believer, a *mu'min,* or an unbeliever, a *kāfir?"* One who has accepted Allah is a *mu'min.* One who has accepted without the slightest doubt that there is only one God and that He alone is worthy of worship and who has brought up that God within his heart is a *mu'min.* Anyone who has brought up religions, castes, and discriminations within his heart is a *kāfir.* A man who brings up many millions of qualities and animals within him is a *kāfir.* But if a man brings up only One, that God, within, then he is a *mu'min.* So the reply was, "Allah alone knows."

To Rābi'ah's question Hasanul-Basrī (رضہ) replied, "Allah is the only One who knows the answer to that. He alone knows."

"That is true," Rābi'ah (رضہ) agreed, and asked the second question. "When I have died and am in my grave, when the two angels, Munkar and Nakīr (عم) question me about the good and evil I have done in my life, what will they ask? What will they write down against my name? Can you tell me this?"

Again Hasanul-Basrī (رضہ) answered, "I do not know the answer. He alone knows."

"That is true," said Rābi'ah (رضہ). Then she asked, "Whatever is recorded by these angels, Munkar and Nakīr (عم), will be given into

9. Hasanul-Basrī (رضہ) (642–728). A famous Sufi, born in Medina, the son of a freed slave. He settled in Basrah, Iraq, where he became a famous teacher.

our hands. Will that scroll be placed in my right hand or my left?"

Hasanul-Basrī ﵁ once again replied, *"In shā' Allāh.* God alone knows into which hand it will be given."

And again Rābi'ah ﵂ agreed with him. Her fourth question was, "There is a Judgment Day for all of us. On that day, will Allah give me heaven or hell? Can you tell me?"

Hasanul-Basrī ﵁ again told her, "God alone knows the answer to that."

Then Rābi'ah ﵂ said, "Hasanul-Basrī, you do not know the answer to these questions. I do not know them either. But these questions have always been my concern. My entire life has been devoted to finding the answers to them. Since I am so completely occupied with this work, if I were to marry you, I wouldn't have any time to cook for you or to look after you. If you could have told me the answers, then I would be free and could be of service to you. But you could not, so I still have to go on trying to discover them. Perhaps in the next second, or the next day, or in a few months, death will come. Marriage may or may not come, but death is most certain to come, and before it does I must know these answers. Once I do, maybe then we can think about marriage. You must try to find out the answers for yourself, and I will also try my best. Come back later and we will see." So the marriage was delayed for the time being.

A few years passed and Hasanul-Basrī ﵁ was still persistent. He came by himself this time and asked Rābi'ah ﵂, "Please, will you not marry me?"

But Rābi'ah ﵂ replied, "I belong to God. I have room in my heart for only that One. There is no room for anyone else. This heart has become His property, therefore I am His property. I belong to Him. It is wrong for you to desire the property of another. If you really want His property, why don't you ask God? If He says, 'All right you can have My property,' then I will marry you."

Rābi'ah ﵂ then reminded him, "Hasanul-Basrī, you have forgotten why you came to this world. You are a great saint and a leader to all the people. You teach wisdom, yet you have forgotten your duty. First of all, realize what you came here for, and set about doing that which will give the greatest benefit to you."

My children, like Rābi'ah ﵂, we must have room in our hearts for only One, and that is God. Until we find the answers to these

four questions we must strive hard. This is the truth. This is what we must do.

My brother, there are some things you should think about. A person indulges in sex for two and a half or three minutes, rolling around like a donkey and performing the pranks of a monkey. It takes only a few minutes to complete the job. The rest of the time he behaves like a donkey. Now, a donkey's body is full of mites and ticks, which keep biting him and sucking his blood, so he has to hunt for a ramshackle, deserted house, where he can find relief by rubbing his hide against the broken down walls.

Man is like that. After rolling like a donkey and performing the antics of a monkey and calling it enjoyment, he is attacked by the mites and ticks of love for gold, attachment to wife, children, relatives, and possessions, discrimination between the 'I' and the 'you', caste differences, and arrogance. These things go on biting him twenty-four hours a day, and, like the donkey, he needs to keep scratching himself. So he goes to some ruins where there are no human beings, only satan, and keeps rubbing himself against that wall of satan all night long.

Then the laundryman arrives and shouts, "Come here, you donkey!" He loads the dirty clothes of the whole countryside on the donkey's back and drives him to the lake. There he washes the clothes and then piles the wet and heavy load on the donkey's back once again. After returning to his shop, the laundryman hangs the clothes out to dry. Right away the donkey runs to the ruins to scratch himself on the wall. He carries the dirt of the world on his back, over and over again, in between runs to the wall for relief.

The mind also, like the donkey, carries the weight of the world back and forth, back and forth. It falls into the ocean of *māyā,* performs its monkey antics for a few minutes, finds relief, then comes back and carries the load of the world again. All through the night, it goes on rubbing against the wall, moaning, "I can't sleep. I can't lie down. I have no peace. I have a headache."

We have to transform ourselves and give up the qualities of the donkey and the antics of the monkey. It is not man that evolved from the monkey, but rather his mind that was born through the antics and pranks of the monkey. His mind loads itself with donkey burdens, then goes where there is no light of wisdom and rubs itself

in the dark against the wall. It carries the dirty loads of ignorance and evil on its back, all the while saying, "I am the greatest."

My brother, the first thing we must do in marriage is to throw away these things that we carry, all the dirty loads of the world. If we get rid of these mites and ticks, we can avoid having to go to the wall to rub our hides. So first of all, learn wisdom. Go to one who has wisdom and try to find a way to eliminate these qualities. Then you will have peace.

There was a man whom God had blessed with a great deal of wealth in this world. God gave him all the comforts in life. He would praise God at every turn (although I don't know which God he was praising). Since he praised God because he was given wealth and health, he was not really praising God, he was praising his wealth and his possessions and his titles and comforts. He would boast about these saying, "This is my property. These are my houses. I have this much land. I have this much wealth. I have a college education. I have an M.A. and a Ph.D., I have this position and all these titles," and so on.

Now it so happened that this man developed a headache. He took various medicines but nothing would work. So he tied a broad bandage around his forehead and went around howling in pain, *"Aiyō! Aiyō!"* People told him there was a saint called Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah that he should seek out. Perhaps she could help him.

So he went to her with the huge bandage around his head and wailed, *"Aiyō!* I cannot bear this headache. I never had a pain like this before. None of the physicians have been of any help. No one is able to cure this headache. It hurts so much."

Then Rābi'ah (رضي الله عنها) told him, "O man! God gave you so much wealth! He gave you education. He gave you titles and position! He gave you wealth. He gave you a home. He gave you happiness and comfort! He gave you all this, yet you never praised Him! Have you thanked Him even once for all He has given you? Did you ever lay your heart open, for even a day, and praise Him or offer gratitude to Him? Did you remember Him? Did you open your heart and pray to Him? Did you think of Him? No! You did not, not even once! You ungrateful man! You showed no gratitude to the One who has helped you so much and protected you for thirty years. You have forgotten the One who gave you all this!

"And yet, for this one-day's headache you have put on a huge bandage and publicized it everywhere. Did you publish for even one day the thirty years of protection He gave you? Did you talk about the favors He has bestowed on you? Did you talk about Him to anyone? Did you talk about His history, about His truth, about His state? Did you speak even one word about Him, the One who has looked after you for thirty years? But now you are publicizing this one-day's headache and proclaiming it to the world! O man! Go back and talk about Him! Tell people about Him. Then your headache will leave you. If you remember the good He has done for you and are grateful, you will be cured of your headache," said Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah (رضي الله عنها) to this man.

We must reflect on this. All things will perish. All things are subject to change. There is only One who does not change or perish.

What use is there in offering flowers and wreaths after one is dead? Offer them to his heart while he is still alive. Show love and compassion to someone while he is still living. Do not cause pain to his heart. Offer help to him. Offer him truth. Look after him as you would look after yourself. Treat his difficulties and suffering as though they were your own. Feel his pain as though it were your own pain.

There is no use in sending flowers after he is dead. You have no way of knowing where he has gone. His punishment or his blessings have been granted in accordance with the evil or good he did while alive. So the flowers are useless. They will merely be a show for the world. Placing flowers in the cemetery—that love will not benefit him once the judgment is over. Offer the flower of love, the flower of compassion, the flower of grace while he is still alive, not after his death.

My children, while you are still alive, place flowers on your own heart and then die—die to yourself and place flowers on your grave. Place the flowers of love, virtue, compassion, and truth on your grave, and they will bloom there.

My children, while you are still in the world you must all die. Your arrogance, your *karma,* your jealousy, your lies, and your satanic qualities must die, and the qualities of Allah must grow. You must foster the love that serves other lives. Those are the flowers that will bloom on your grave. That will be your flower garden in *ākhirah,* in paradise. That is the flower world, heaven. Grow those flowers. Plant

the flowers of truth and love and God's qualities in your heart now. Grow the divine flower garden within you while you are here.

That is the truth. You must reflect on it. Words alone are useless, you must bring them into action. Do not give room for anything else where only the One must reside. This is what Rābi'ah (ra) told him.

One day Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah (ra) set out on a pilgrimage to Mecca and the *Ka'bah.* Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (ra)[10] was also on his way to Mecca, but it took him fourteen years to get there. Every two steps he would stop to perform ritual prayers, and whenever he passed a mosque, he would go inside and pray. After fourteen long years, Ibrāhīm (ra) finally arrived at the mosque in Mecca, but he did not see the *Ka'bah.* He ran about frantically looking for it. "Have I gone blind? Do I not have eyes? The *Ka'bah* is not here. Is what I am seeing just a dream? Is what I am seeing false, O God? I do not see the *Ka'bah* here. I have been walking for fourteen years to get here, and all the way, I have been worshiping You, without forgetting You for even one moment." He ran around and wailed in this manner but there was no response. So he asked the people of that place, "Where is the *Ka'bah?* I don't see it here."

Finally someone told him, "The *Ka'bah* has gone to see a certain woman."

"What a wonder this is!" Ibrāhīm (ra) exclaimed. "Who is this woman? She has committed a great sin, by causing so much trouble for us all. It took me fourteen years to get here, praying all the way, and the *Ka'bah* has gone to that woman! She has caused so much harm to the world. Who is this woman?"

"Be patient, have *sabūr,*" the people told him. "The *Ka'bah* will return in a little while."

But he could not bear to wait. "Tell me who she is!" he demanded. "Where is she? What is her name?"

"Her name is Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah," they replied. "She can be found somewhere in that direction."

Filled with anger, Ibrāhīm (ra) went to find her. Finally he saw the *Ka'bah* and saw Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah (ra) inside. "What kind of

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10. Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (ra) (d.783). A famous Sufi, born a prince of Balkh, Afghanistan.

a woman are you?" he demanded. "You have caused the city so much trouble. You have caused difficulties for God and for all the people. You are causing everyone problems. You are just one woman, yet you are causing problems for so many people," he shouted, angrily.

Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah (ra) listened very patiently and then replied, "Why are you scolding me? I have not done anything wrong. Why do you scold me like this?"

Ibrāhīm (ra) said, "It is because of you that the *Ka'bah* came here. It has taken me fourteen years to walk to Mecca, and when I finally arrived, the *Ka'bah* was not there! See how much trouble you have caused me and the people of the city."

"Very well, O Ibrāhīm, son of Adham. What you say is quite true," Rābi'ah (ra) replied. "But I did not set out to see what you came to see. I did not ask to see what you desired to see. You came to see the *Ka'bah,* this stone building. I neither loved it nor cared to see it. I want to see only Allah. I need only Allah. I did not set out to see the stone or anything else. I do not desire such things. I did not set out to see what you came for. The only thing I want is Allah. My sole desire is to see Allah. What happened is Allah's work. What can I do about it? It is not my fault if the stone that you wanted to see came here. That was God's work. It is not my fault. I did not set out to see that *Ka'bah.* I wanted only to see Allah."

While she was saying this, the sound of Allah came, "Rābi'ah, be careful what you say. Be silent. Watch your words when you speak. When Moses came to speak to Me on Mount Sinai, I sent down only a tiny particle of Myself, and the sound of that tiny particle split Mount Sinai into forty pieces. Mount Sinai used to be forty miles high, not its present height. Now it is very small. During the time of Moses, that mountain near Jerusalem was split into forty pieces, and in that instant Moses fell down dead. I sent merely a tiny particle, a fragment of My light, and yet it shattered that mountain and Moses died. Therefore, abandon the idea of wanting to see Me. You cannot see Me. To see Me, look within yourself and be careful. Be careful, be silent. You must reflect upon this."

Then Rābi'ah (ra) continued to address Ibrāhīm (ra), "I did not come here to see what you came to see. You came to see that stone. Take a good look and go your way. I wanted to see something else. You traveled, praying all the way, and your journey took fourteen

years. O Ibrāhīm, son of Adham, do you realize how many days you wasted during that time? From where you started, it should have taken only thirty days to journey to Mecca, only one lunar month, the time between the first crescent moon and the new moon, yet it took you fourteen years. The prayers you performed on your journey were just a show for the world. You have actually been worshiping the world. You performed these prayers every two steps so people would see you, praise you, and give you titles. Not one of those prayers was directed toward God. Your body has aged fourteen years. Do not waste your time like this. Do not waste your time in vain.

"If you had performed just one *waqt,* one time of prayer, truly in the name of God, then the *Ka'bah* would have come to you. You have not prayed even one *waqt* in this way. You claim to have prayed every two steps, but your mind desired the world. Your prayer was an outward show and did not come from within your heart. If you had opened your heart and truly prayed within to God, even for one *waqt,* then the *Ka'bah* would have come to you.

Your journey should have taken only thirty days, no more. But you have aged fourteen years. "If any of us would truly worship Allah for just one prayer, one *waqt,* then seven hundred million years would seem like one day. If any of us would pray one prayer sincerely, directing it only to Allah, then that prayer would give him life for seven hundred million years. To you, one month became fourteen years. This is the difference. This is only one explanation, but it is sufficient.

"If you had truly prayed just once, the *Ka'bah* would have come to you. You have wasted fourteen years of your life. Now, return, open your heart, and pray sincerely. Then the *Ka'bah* will come to see you." This is what Rābi'ah (ra) told Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (ra).

We must think about this. We must open our hearts. If we truly open our hearts, pray to God and worship Him just once with complete sincerity, then whatever we intend will come to us. We must reflect upon this. May God protect all of us. *Āmīn.*

July 26, 1979

Session 9

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Session 9

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Are there any questions my children would like to ask?

JOHN BARNETT: Bawa has spoken of the importance of faith, determination, and certitude. I was wondering if he could define certitude and talk about its importance.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It is indeed very important. Throughout life, what is called faith is very necessary for us. We also need certitude and steadfast determination. Whatever we may set out to do in life, we need these three things. Whether we are farming, working, studying, or going on a journey, all three are essential for our progress. But no matter how much faith and certitude we have, we also need the wisdom that can inform us of the difference between right and wrong or good and bad in anything we may do. Unless that wisdom is present, we will not be able to distinguish between them.

In our journey called life, wisdom is the light for the path we travel on. Along with faith, this light of wisdom is most essential for our journey. It gives majesty and glory to our life. Faith is the staff that helps us climb mountains that could not otherwise be climbed, while wisdom is the chain that helps to pull us up the mountain. Faith is the ship on which we can cross the ocean, while wisdom is the motor for the ship. If we want to cross a desert, faith will be our camel, and wisdom will be our water. Even before we enter the desert, wisdom will tell us what to expect and what to take along to cross the desert. Thus, for all the journeys of our life, faith and wisdom are essential.

Now, all creatures possess the first three of the seven levels of wisdom—perception, awareness, and intellect. They can survive using only these three levels of consciousness, whether in the desert, in the ocean, or on the mountains. Fish live in the ocean; snakes, worms,

and insects live in the wilderness; animals live in the jungle; and scorpions, snakes, and birds live on the mountains. But they do not know wrong from right. They do not know what is going to happen and how to avert it. They have intellect, no doubt, and using this they can bring forth young and give them milk. Birds and fish lay eggs and hatch them. Cows give birth to calves and bring them up. With intellect, feeling, and awareness, these creatures have the capacity to do all these things. But they do not know the difference between right and wrong. They defecate where they eat and sleep where they defecate. If a cow is grazing, another cow goes behind it and licks its backside or even drinks its urine. One cow passes urine and dung, and another may continue to graze in that place, not aware that it is unclean. Those creatures do not have the divine analytic wisdom that distinguishes right from wrong.

For man, it is not enough to have just intellect, feeling, and awareness. All animals are endowed with that. Man needs wisdom. He needs judgment or evaluation (the fourth level), subtle wisdom (fifth), divine analytic wisdom (sixth), and divine luminous wisdom (seventh). Only if he has all these can he be identified as man. He is the most exalted among all of God's creations, the only one who can know the difference between right and wrong. And it is only this creation called man who has the capacity to think about God. Man knows he has been born and must die. He knows he needs to clean his food, cut and cook it, and add salt or lemon, as well as other things, to make the food tasty. Only man has the wisdom to know these things.

Since man has this ability, he needs to find out what he must do about birth and death. He needs to find out about himself and the One who created him. He needs to know where he came from and where he will go. Those who came to this world with us are changing their state and leaving. The parents who gave birth to us have gone, and so have our grandparents. Kings have died, as well as beggars. Where have they all gone? We saw them once, but we no longer see them. There must be an explanation for this. There must be a place where we were before we came here, a place to which we return after we leave. That place could be our true homeland. That place could be the one we must go to at the end. We have to reflect on this. Who are the ones living here, and who are the ones living there?

What kind of food do we eat here, and what food will we eat there? Where were we before? What is the reason for our coming here? Where will we go from here? What will we receive there, compared to what we get here?

We need wisdom to be able to reflect upon these questions and to understand the answers. Before setting out on life's journey we need divine analytic wisdom and divine luminous wisdom, so we can plan the journey in a way that will free us from trouble and suffering. As we go on reflecting we will begin to realize that there is a natural Power that created us, a Power that makes creations appear and then takes them back into itself and re-creates them over and over again, a Power that lies far beyond our comprehension. We are beings that possess a mind and desire and have a love for earth, gold, and woman, but that Power lies far beyond all of these. That Power is what is called God. It cannot be seen, because it has no form, but it exists within all lives in the form of wisdom and justice.

God is the name we have given to that Power. We need to reflect on that Power, and to do that we need wisdom. It is wisdom that can get us to the place where He exists, where we can reach Him, see Him, and pray to Him. What does it mean to pray? It is the expression of our gratitude to our Father. We offer Him thanks and we offer our respects to Him and pay obeisance to Him. In what way should we thank Him? By taking on His qualities and actions and demonstrating them in our conduct, and by taking on His sounds and proclaiming our gratitude to those born with us.

On this journey called life we have to learn these things and understand them. In doing so, we may have to face danger, pain, and suffering caused by other creations such as monkeys and donkeys, who have intellect but lack wisdom. Our monkey mind, which desires all sorts of things, causes our wisdom and truth to suffer hardships. To avert these difficulties we need to use faith and wisdom. Then we can proceed on our journey, so we can see our Father face to face and pay obeisance to Him. The true meaning of prayer and obeisance is to acquire His qualities and show them in our actions. For this we need faith. There are many kinds of faith, but true faith is the one born of understanding and clarity.

No matter what we set out to do in life, we need faith and certitude, but without clarity, our faith will be merely the faith of

cows, goats, snakes, and other creatures which defecate where they eat and sleep where they defecate. They too have faith. But our faith must be the kind that understands what is true and real, and to have certitude in that. That is what is essential to man. That is what will benefit us.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: What is your name?

RESPONSE: John.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Where do you live?

JOHN: In Boston.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You need patience. Wrath is an enemy to wisdom. Hastiness eats up wisdom. Anger is the guru of sin. Lust is vaster than the ocean. Duty is greater than God. The actions of one who does not reflect on the possible results of those actions will bring him an undying death. All that glitters is not gold. A golden pot needs no adornment. It does not need make-up or embellishment.

If you understand these, it will be good for you.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Any other questions?

QUESTION: A person trained in medicine and psychology told me that you should not seek divine luminous wisdom until you are thirty-five years old. How should I have answered him?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Had this person studied psychology?

RESPONSE: It's a person with a degree in psychology.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The grass and the weeds seek rain in order to grow. The trees seek water and fertilizer. Without it they cannot grow. It is what causes growth. Man also needs two things: wisdom and God. It is essential for us to think about God and wisdom, isn't it? These two form the water and fertilizer essential for man's growth. Without them man would be like a crop without water, wouldn't he? Deprived of water nothing can grow, it would be like an arid desert. Such would be the state of man.

Therefore, you could have told the doctor, "Since you are a doctor, it would have been good if you had thought about this. Two things, water and fertilizer, are essential for every living creation. No matter what we want to grow, it needs water and fertilizer. In the same way, we need wisdom and the thought about the Treasure called God. If we did not have this, we could not grow. We need the constant thought of God."

This is what you can tell him. You could have put your higher wisdom to use and told him this. What he told you came from a feeble intellect and feeble wisdom. He must have thought that you should not seek *gnānam,* or divine knowledge, before the age of thirty-five or forty. You can tell him that you did not go in search of *gnānam.* Tell him you are just in a school where you are seeking wisdom and the remembrance of God. Tell him that you are still learning and have not yet gone out to seek this thing called *gnānam.* Then ask him, "If I had *gnānam,* why would I have wanted to talk to a psychology doctor?"

QUESTIONER: It is a woman psychology doctor.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It doesn't make any difference. You could have told her, "Because I lacked wisdom, I made certain mistakes in my life. That is why I came to you. I thought if I had wisdom, I would be safe and then I wouldn't have needed to come to you any longer. If I can seek the water and fertilizer that will make my wisdom grow, then I can live in peace. So I only went looking for wisdom, not for divine luminous wisdom." Please tell her that. "It is only because I lacked wisdom that I went on doing whatever my mind told me to. Then I came to this psychology, or ciphercology. A cipher is a zero. But if I'd had wisdom, I'd have avoided all the things I did and would have saved myself all this trouble and lived in peace. That's why I decided I need wisdom and I need the remembrance of God. Finding divine wisdom is not an easy job. Let it come, and when it does, if it does, I won't be coming here any longer." This is what you can tell her. Anybody else?

QUESTION: I have heard Bawa talk about the saying, "Duty is greater than God." It seems, in my life, that when I discover one

duty and begin to do it, more and more duties come along, and they are endless. I find myself confused about how I can do all of these duties—duty to God and duty to my parents and my brothers and sisters. Does that saying mean that duty is endless?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Let's say there is a lake to which goats, cows, donkeys, horses, and human beings all come. The lake does its duty to all of them. Anyone who wants to come there is free to do so. Those who want to bathe will bathe, those who want to drink will drink, and those who want to wash their clothes will do so. The lake does its duty to each of them, giving to each whatever it wants. That is the duty of the lake. It shows no partiality or discrimination toward any of them, whether they be cows or goats or donkeys or horses. Does the lake favor one over another? No. What does it do? It treats them all alike. That is its most important duty.

Similarly, when the sun comes out, does it shine only on cows or goats or horses? No. It is dutiful to all equally. Does it show any preference? No. Does the moon choose who to shine upon? No. Likewise, the wind blows everywhere, cooling everyone. Even the earth gives benefit to all who till the soil. God also does impartial duty to all, without any attachment or favoritism.

We need to perform our duties in the same way, without any attachment or favoritism. When that kind of wisdom accompanies your performance of duty, you will treat everyone the same, whatever their color may be. To you, everyone's blood will be the same. Everyone's body will appear the same. Now look at me. My color is black. But only the tissue (skin) on the surface is black. If you tear it away, you will find that what is underneath is the same as what is under your skin. It is the same for everyone, no matter who. Only the tissue paper on the surface is different. Each one has a different colored tissue paper pasted onto the surface. We look at the color of the tissue paper and see differences, but it is merely colored tissue paper laid on each work of art. If you were to remove the tissue paper and look inside, there would be no difference at all. And just as skin color gets burnt when the sun shines, all color differences are burnt away when wisdom shines. There is no more black, white, yellow, or red.

So, when we say, "Duty is greater than God," what is the nature

of this duty? God has no body, no wife or children, no attachments to relatives and family, and no desire for earth or gold or woman. He shows no differences or discrimination. God is not born and does not die. He has no color or form. He has no selfishness. God is one who is free of all these obstacles. He is a Power, a reality that transcends the beginning and the end. That Power can do anything, before He even thinks about it. Thus He has no obstacles that will block Him in His duty.

Man, on the other hand, is troubled by hunger, disease, suffering, and aging. He is born and he dies. He needs money. He has a house, property, wealth, a spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, blood ties, and discriminations regarding caste and color. So many problems and difficulties have been rolled together to form his body. And in spite of all of this, man has to perform his duties. The eighteen thousand universes, arrogance, *karma, māyā, tārahan, singhan,* and *sūran;* animal qualities, snake qualities, qualities of poisonous creatures, of scorpions, demonic qualities, witch qualities, qualities of blood-sucking ghosts, of jinns and fairies, of satans, the conceit of 'I am greater than you'; desire, anger, miserliness, infatuation, fanaticism, envy; intoxication, lust, thievery, murder, and falsehood—all of these make up the seventeen thousand worlds that exist within him. In all, man contains four hundred trillion, ten thousand formless qualities and deities fashioned by mind and desire. All these qualities, which suck his blood, have been formed by his mind.

So if man, dwelling in the midst of all of these, performs his duty in the same manner that God does, loving all other lives as he loves his own, feeling the pain and illness of others as his own, knowing others' sorrows as his own sorrow, loving his neighbors as much as he loves his own life—if he can do duty to them in a detached manner, seeing all of them as equal, if he can bring comfort and solace to all lives without attachment, discrimination, or partiality, then that is indeed great duty.

Look at a lotus leaf. It lies on top of the water without retaining any of the water. If a drop should fall on one of its waxy leaves, the leaf keeps it on the surface without absorbing it. If you pluck any other kind of leaf (leaves that don't live in ponds) and dip it in water, when you take it out you will see it has absorbed the water. But the

lotus leaf, which dwells in the water, will not retain any of it.

If we can perform our duty in that way, in spite of being surrounded by all these obstacles and difficulties, such duty is certainly greater than God. Why? God's duty is so much easier. He has no body, no hunger to deal with. We have to do our duty in spite of all these difficulties. This is the meaning of the saying, "Duty is greater than God."

The way we are presently performing our duty may be tainted with selfishness. If our worldly duties are done out of selfishness, for our blood ties, or for the love of the world, we will absorb the dark water of ignorance *(agnānam),* just as the leaf that dwells out of water absorbs any water it touches. Such duties will draw *karma* and sin into us. This is what duty prompted by selfishness will do.

But if, like the lotus leaf that lies on the water, we do our duty with the qualities that dwell in God—that will be good duty. We must show love to all. We must feel for everyone and help every life. Duty done in this manner is the most exalted duty. It is difficult to do, no doubt, but we still must do it in that way.

DON HEAD: I have a duty toward my brother. He needs to come here but is unable to. How can I get him to come here?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: He may be your brother, but he is not in the same station as you are. At the moment your father and mother joined to form you, they may have been thinking about God. When the picture (that was going to be you) was being filmed, their thoughts and intentions may have been on God. Thus, you were formed from good thoughts and intentions, and when you were born and grew up, you took on those intentions. Even now, you find you need those original intentions that were there when the original photograph was taken.

But at the time that your brother was being formed—when his picture was being taken—the thoughts in the parents may have been affected by the arrogance of the 'I', the conceit of "I am the greatest," fanaticism, and bigotry of caste or race. This may have been the nature of the thoughts that were imprinted when his picture was being taken. Even though you both may have been formed in the

same womb, different circumstances could have been present. As a result, what he needs are those things, while what you need are the qualities that were impressed on you. Was it the same womb?

DON: No.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It is all right. He is doing what he has to do. You go on doing what is right for you.

If a horse wants to be a racehorse, let it run. Don't try to stop it. It may win, or it may lose. Let it find out for itself. And the cart horse, let it draw the cart. Its legs are stouter, and its body is bigger. Both are horses, no doubt. Let each one do what it has to do. On the other hand, there are horses with good qualities, good thoughts, good conduct, and good wisdom, just like human beings. They have the quality of instinctively sensing any impending danger (such as snakes or robbers on the road ahead) and protecting their master.

Similarly, there are many different kinds of human beings. They have different kinds of qualities and different kinds of actions. Therefore, do not tie a racehorse to a cart, and do not use a cart horse to ride on a long journey. Both would find it difficult. You need not feel sorrow or be dejected about this. One day your brother will understand.

QUESTIONER: About eighteen years ago, I was in a yoga group that was run by a phony *swāmi,* and I got a friend of mine involved in that group. My friend is still in that group, and from time to time, feelings of guilt come along in my mind because it seems as if I was the cause of his being there. I just wanted Bawa to know this. I don't know if it's my arrogance or what.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You do not have to think like that. Do not worry about it. If you want to take a journey, you need a train. The two of you, who were friends, heard that there was a train, so you both went to the station. But after getting on the train, you realized something was wrong with the engine and that the train was heading for an accident. You told your friend, "There is something wrong with the engine. This train might topple over at any moment. Our lives are in danger. We got ourselves into this plight unknowingly. When we got on, we did not know what we were in for.

It's true that we do have to go on this journey, but let us find another train. Let us try to escape."

You tried to tell him this, but he refused to listen. He said, "Oh no! I like this train. It suits me. I'm happy. You go if you like."

At that point your duty to him was finished and you escaped to safety. You told him what you had to tell him. If the train and he found each other suitable, that is fine, because he is getting what he needs. He is obtaining what he wants from the person who is there. So we need not worry.

Feces is like sugar to a dog. If you take a dog for a walk, it will stop wherever it finds feces. It will even drag you to that place and refuse to move away from there. If the dog refuses to leave, and if you are unable to pull it away, then you have to say, "Stay if you like, but don't pull me into the feces." Then you must leave the dog there and go your way.

Your duty is to seek wisdom. The other person is not your responsibility at all. It does not concern you.

QUESTION: To be a true child of God, we are supposed to practice God's qualities of love, mercy, and compassion. I understand that to feel anger is wrong and that it is a satanic quality, but that God used that quality to destroy the world in the time of Noah (عم). If we have some of that quality within us, why is it wrong, especially if we see injustices being committed?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: There is no justification for anger. God has no anger. God did not destroy human beings in the time of Noah (عم). If you look into this with understanding, you will realize that Noah (عم) tried repeatedly to tell the people to accept God and place their trust in Him. He told this to human beings, animals, birds, and reptiles alike. But then along came satan, and with his qualities, he converted them to his side and brought them under his control. He even attempted to get them to do away with Noah (عم).

Now, when the people refused to accept God and set out to kill Noah (عم), he turned to God and said, "O my God! The world has deteriorated to such an extent that my life is in danger. You alone must find a solution to this." And he handed over the responsibility

to God. Then the sound of God came, "O Noah! Gather all those who are your followers onto an ark and set out on a journey. I will deal with the others. With My steady gaze I will make the oceans rise for forty days, and through that, the very ones who sought to inflict torment upon you will themselves undergo torment."

Accordingly, Noah (ع) gathered together those who followed him, those who had faith in God. The ark was constructed, and they began boarding. Now, satan knew that God was going to destroy the world. He also knew that he could not board the ship without Noah's permission. All the animals were now on board except the donkey, who was the last in line. So what did satan do? He assumed an invisible, dark form and clung to the tail of the donkey. Then, while Noah (ع) was trying to coax the donkey onto the ship, satan forcefully pulled it backward by its tail, trying to prevent it from boarding.

This is the true story of exactly what happened, but it does not at all resemble what you read in books or see in films. All these stories contain many deep meanings.

Now satan knew he had to obtain permission from God or from one of His prophets before he could go anywhere with them on a journey. So, since all those who were Noah's followers had boarded the ship, except the donkey, satan had to find a speedy way to get Noah's permission to board the ark. He knew that Noah (ع) would have to get that donkey onto the ship quickly, because the time was fast approaching to set sail. So as hard as Noah (ع) tried to push that donkey on board, satan pulled in the opposite direction, thus preventing the donkey from boarding the ship. Noah (ع), in a fit of exasperation, finally shouted at the donkey, "Get in, you satan!" And satan promptly let go of the donkey's tail and got onto the ark in his invisible dark form. Once there, he hid in a corner.

Now that everyone was on board, they set sail. Then the rains came and the seas overflowed. The floods rose, and everything on earth was being destroyed.

On board, all the animals were in a state of unity, God's unity. Lions, tigers, bears—all of them lived side by side in peace. But satan began to incite the animals, insidiously creeping into the bear, the tiger, and others. As satan's qualities entered the animals, they became hostile to one another and began attacking and killing and eating each other. At about this same time, those on board began to look

around and notice feces and filth strewn everywhere—a sure sign that orderly conduct had departed. Creatures were defecating all over the place and the stench was increasing. In addition, the people were running to Noah (ع) and reporting that the ship was overrun by rats, which were boring holes in the hull.

Noah (ع) was shocked to see all this happening. He wondered, "How can this occur in a place where everyone should be acting with Allah's qualities and actions? Why is there this enmity and fighting?"

So Noah (ع) began searching for the cause, stroking each animal. In the meantime, satan had taken the form of an animal and was crouching near the donkey, which is satan's vehicle.

Now, as Noah (ع) was looking into this matter and observing the animals' anger and lack of patience, even to the point of killing one another, he discovered satan crouching in hiding near the donkey. Noah (ع) demanded of him, "O satan! How did you get in here? Are you the one responsible for all this?"

Satan replied, "O great one! O Prophet! It was by your command that I entered the ship. I could not have done so if you had not given me permission. I knew that God was going to destroy the world and everyone in it—those I had led astray and who were my followers. I knew God was going to destroy all those I had estranged from Him. That is why I was tugging at the tail of the donkey. Since the donkey is my possession, I was able to hold onto it. You tried pushing the donkey in, but when you found it wouldn't budge you became angry and shouted, 'Get in, you satan!' Well, when you spoke those words, I let go of its tail and got into the ship. So now I am living with the donkey."

And Noah (ع) shouted, "O God! What can I do about all this?" Then Noah (ع) pondered, "The animals were conducting themselves so well earlier! What has satan done to change them? He has turned the ship into a disgusting place. There is so much dirt and filth here. He also created rats, which are swarming all over the ship and boring holes in it. As a result, the ship could sink."

So Noah (ع) begged Allah to show him what to do and Allah told him, "Smite the forehead of the tiger with your staff, saying the words *Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm.*" When Noah (ع) tapped the forehead of the tiger with his staff, a cat fell out of the nose of the tiger and began to run about and catch the rats.

Then Allah said to Noah (ع), "O Noah! I am the One who can create. I am the One who can give food. Whatever creation I bring forth, I alone can give the adequate nourishment. No one else can. I am the One who can feed My creations. Now, with My sound and through your touch, I created the cat. I made nine kinds of life for this animal, and I decreed its flesh prohibited *(harām)* for My creations. No one must eat the flesh of the cat. But because it was created through you, the cat will live in people's houses and be the enemy to rats and mice, thus protecting the houses from their mischief.

Cats will always live among mankind, with an attachment to human beings, but it will not have the quality of gratitude, since it came out of the qualities of the tiger. However, because it also emerged through the power of My word, it will possess a magnetic current, and that warm current will make it want to purr and rub against human beings. I decree this creation prohibited to all My creations."

And so it was that the cat set about catching and eating the rats. But Noah (ع), observing that the feces and filth were still everywhere, had to beg of God once again. "O God! This place is filled with so much filth that it cannot be washed away."

And God told him, "O Noah! Say *Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm,* and strike the forehead of the elephant with your staff."

When Noah (ع) did so, a pig was born out of the nose of the elephant. At once the pig began to gobble up all the feces. Then God said, "O Noah! Because the power of My word was responsible for its creation, the pig will have a certain magnetic current in its body and will not die easily. Because of this magnetic current, the pig, like the cat, will want to be near human beings. But since the pig belongs to the section of filth and feces, I decree its flesh to be prohibited *(harām)* for My creations. I have decreed it so, not only to you and your people, but to every prophet and to their people, and to all of My creations. None of My creations should eat its flesh for its body will be inhabited by filthy, dirty, evil things, by ghosts and spirits."

Then God gave more details to Noah (ع) concerning the pig. If a man eats the flesh of a pig once, he will lose the beauty of his countenance for six months. For six months, good words will not

issue from his tongue. In any house where even a drop of the pig's blood falls, the food of grace *(rizq)* will not descend to that house for six months. Prophets and saints will not enter any house in which pigs live. If anyone goes on eating the flesh of the pig, his qualities will change to become like the qualities of the pig. God's power and grace will not come into him. This is what will happen to anyone who disregards the words and commandments of God.

"O Noah! The dog, like the pig, will grow very fast. The dog grew out of evil, from the spit of satan, while the pig grew on the hell of filth and feces. Since both thrive on filthy things, they grow fast and become big very quickly. A dog, like a pig, can have a litter of sixteen at one time, and except for one pup, the others will grow big.

Thus God rules with authority over His creations, those who were created by Him but were led astray by satan. Noah (a.s.) did not destroy those creations. He gave responsibility to God, saying, "O God! These people have changed, so please do with them as You will. You look after this!"

So why don't you also say that? Once you have taken on the qualities of God and acquired His actions, when you have become free of the traits of all those things that set out to attack and destroy you and try to overcome you—all the *karmas* and the evils and your anger, hastiness, and sins—at that stage you will be one who has perfect faith in God. And when you have faith in God, when your *īmān* (faith, certitude, and determination) is steadfast, you will not kill any life. What will you do at that stage? You will say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh* (All praise is to God)!" and *"Tawakkul-'alallāh* (I give all responsibility to God). Everything is in Your keeping. You do what has to be done."

Since God is the Creator, He is the One who does everything. *Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm.* He is the One who creates, the One who protects and nourishes, and the One who destroys. Within the blinking of an eye, He can create, He can destroy, and He can reclaim to Himself. That is His duty. You cannot do the work He does, can you? You must hand over the responsibility. It is our duty to do that, so it will be good if we can. That is what Noah (a.s.) did. He handed over responsibility to the One whose responsibility it was. Your duty is to come to the state in which you will hand over responsibility to

the One who has the responsibility. It is His duty, and He will attend to it. Do you understand?

Like Noah (as), the Prophet Jonah (as) was also sent down by God to tell the people, "Believe in God. Place your faith in Him, and pray to Him." But the people did not accept Jonah's words either. They did not accept him as a prophet. He tried everything he could, he told them everything he knew. But no matter what he said or did, they refused to accept him or his words. He had to undergo many difficulties. Then Jonah (as) cried out to God, "O God! They do not believe what I tell them. They do not listen. Please destroy them, O God!" He pleaded with God in this manner. Then the sound of God came, "O Jonah! I have heard your words. Take the ones who listen to you and leave. I will deal with the others."

Then Jonah (as) asked, "O God! How will You do this?"

"You go. I will do what has to be done."

"By what means will You destroy them?"

God replied, "The power of My gaze will make the sky come down on them in the form of fire and consume them. You go." And as Jonah (as) looked, the sky became dark and turned into fire. Jonah (as) grabbed his wife and two children and they ran and ran and ran toward the sea, where there was a ship waiting. But between them and the sea was a small river to cross.

Jonah (as) left his wife and one child on the bank, took hold of the other child, and began to swim quickly across the river. But right in the middle of the river, a crocodile snapped up the child and dragged him away. Jonah (as) looked back to the shore, and just then a striped tiger leaped upon his wife and other child and carried them off. Now his whole family was gone. There was nothing left to do but continue across the river and go on to the ocean.

When Jonah (as) reached the place where the ship was waiting, he asked the captain, "Will you please take me on your ship?"

"This ship is already full," the captain told him, "but you are elderly and seem like a good man. You have a beautiful countenance filled with light. So even though it will be difficult, we will take you. Come, get in."

Jonah (as) boarded the ship. But as soon as it started moving, it began to be tossed about wildly by the current. The captain exclaimed, "In all the years I have been in charge of this ship, the sea

has never been so violent and my ship has never been tossed about this way. It looks like everyone will be destroyed. There must be someone on board who is an enemy to God. If we throw that person overboard, all of us can escape this danger. Who is the one that is an enemy to God?"

No one came forward. So the captain asked each person on board to write down his name on a slip of paper. They put all the papers together and somebody drew one. The name on it was Jonah (ع).

The captain asked, "Who is this person called Jonah?"

Prophet Jonah (ع) came forward and said, "I am Jonah."

But the captain protested, "There must be a mistake! This man cannot be an enemy to God, his face does not show that. There is light in his face. Besides, he is an elderly man, a good man. It cannot be." So he told them, "Draw the lots again." Again the name that was drawn was Jonah (ع). The captain still refused to accept this, so they drew for a third time, and again Jonah's (ع) name was drawn.

Then Jonah (ع) came forward and said, "I am the one who is the enemy to God. I am the only one who is guilty. All of you must escape. Throw me into the sea and then the storm will stop. Jonah (ع) offered himself, but the captain still refused, and said, "O great one, please don't do this. There must be a mistake." So they drew lots for the fourth time, and again the name of Jonah (ع) came up.

Jonah (ع) again said, "I am the guilty one. All of you must escape," and he jumped over the side of the ship into the ocean and immediately was swallowed by a whale. Once inside the stomach of the whale, he began reciting one of Allah's verses in praise of God. Because of this, the whale could not digest him. Jonah (ع) lived inside the stomach of the whale for forty days. Finally the whale developed a stomach ache and nausea. It rolled and twisted about in the ocean until it beached itself on the shore of an island and began to retch, spitting Jonah (ع) out onto the sand.

When Jonah (ع) stood up and looked around, all he could see was sand as white as milk everywhere. Other than a small creeper from a cucumber vine, nothing was growing on that little strip of island for as far as he could see. Unable to bear the heat of the sun, Jonah (ع) sat under the creeper for relief. After a while a deer appeared and said to Jonah (ع), "Come, drink." There was milk dripping from the udder of the deer into a little pitcher. Without questioning,

Jonah (عم) drank the milk of the deer and ate the fruit of the creeper. Every day, the deer came and gave him milk regularly and then left again.

In this way, six months went by. At the end of that time the voice of God came, saying, "Jonah, I sent you as a prophet to go among the people, to comfort them and give them solace. But what are you doing? You have been quite happy here for six months, drinking the deer's milk and enjoying the shade of the vine. Is this the reason I sent you? Did I send you here to find your own comfort?"

Jonah (عم) cried out, "Oh, God, what can I do? Everything is lost!"

And God commanded him, "Go back."

Jonah (عم) was distraught. "How can I go back? I have no way of going."

But God repeated His command, "Go, go back. Go back and do what I sent you to do."

So Jonah (عم) went to the shore and found a ship waiting there. It looked just like the ship he had been on before. The captain willingly took him aboard, and the ship returned to the same spot it had previously sailed from. The moment he got off the ship, he found his wife and both children standing where he had left them. They were looking for him. Jonah (عم) ran up to them and asked, "Have you been waiting here all these days?"

But they just looked at him and said, "What do you mean? You left only two minutes ago, saying you were coming right back. So we were waiting for you."

Then Jonah (عم) related all that had happened. "God destroyed everything. I boarded a ship and later jumped into the ocean. Then I was swallowed by a whale and lived in its stomach for forty days. After that I lived on an island for six months. Finally God commanded me to return."

His wife was astonished. "What you are saying is indeed a great wonder. It was only two minutes ago that you left."

As Jonah (عم) and his wife and children started walking to their village, they saw all the people coming toward them shouting and crying, "O Jonah, our prophet! Please come back! We accept you. You are indeed our prophet!"

"What a wonder this is!" Jonah (عم) said to them. "Why aren't you all dead? Weren't you destroyed? What happened?"

The people told him, "O Prophet Jonah, we did not accept you earlier. We did not have faith in God or faith in you. Then suddenly, within two seconds the skies became dark, then red, and then burst into a fire which was coming down to consume us. The heat was so intense that before the fire could even get near us, we began to wail and shout, pleading, 'O God, the One who created us, please save us!'

"At once the voice of God resounded, 'If you do not have faith in Me or in My prophet, all of you on this earth will be destroyed by this fire from the sky.'

"In one voice we cried out, 'O God, we do have faith in You! We believe in You and we believe in Your prophet! We will do exactly as You say.' Immediately the fiery sky receded, and we ran here to find you and saw you coming toward the city."

"How long ago did this happen?" asked Jonah (a).

"It all happened in a matter of five minutes."

"What a wonder! You say all this took only five minutes. But so much has happened to me during that time! I went on a ship, then I jumped overboard and was swallowed by a whale. I remained in its stomach for forty days, and then I lived on an island for six months. How can this be?"

Then the voice of God came again, "O Jonah, you asked Me to destroy all the people, and yet you took your wife and children and tried to run away, didn't you? Are they the only ones that belong to you? No! Every life here is yours, you are a prophet to all. Every atom is your property. Have you not realized this? Were you foolish enough to think that only your wife and two children belong to you? How could you ask that everyone should be destroyed except you and your family? Is that the reason I sent you as a prophet? Did I send you for selfish gain? Did I send you to destroy all other lives? No, I sent you to dispel the people's ignorance and to give them peace and impress them with wisdom, so that they will be able to reach Me. But you wanted them destroyed. I am the Lord and Creator of all lives. *Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm.* I am the One who protects them, and I also forgive their faults and take them back unto Me. I am their Savior. I did not create them to destroy them or to destroy the qualities of God. What should be destroyed instead is ignorance, evil, and the qualities of satan. It is not My creations that I destroy, it is their evil qualities.

"Now, look at all that has happened to you. You swam across the river carrying your son. He was dragged off by a crocodile, and your wife and other child were carried away by a tiger. Then, you lived in the stomach of a whale for forty days and drank a deer's milk for six months. You experienced all this, didn't you? You thought so much time had gone by, and yet I did all that within five minutes, from the time you tried to swim across the river until now. Reflect upon this.

"This is all My work. There is nothing I cannot do. I am the Emperor who can create and destroy within the blink of an eye. Protecting, nurturing, and saving My creations and then reclaiming them is My job. Your job is to do what I told you to do. Tell My creations what I told you to say, but say it with the deep inner patience known as *sabūr.* Dispel their ignorance and make their faith flourish. Help them to reach Me, O My prophet. You must have firm determination and the belief that every life is like your life. You must not run off or think that only your wife and children belong to you. You were born to the title of prophethood, so you must obey My commands. Now go and do what I told you to do."

My children, we must not intend to destroy others. Instead, we must preach the wisdom that can dispel their ignorance and teach them the wisdom that can overcome their lack of wisdom. That will be a victory. I give you my love. *Āmīn.*

July 27, 1979

Session 10

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Session 10

QUESTION: By what signs can we be aware of the existence of God? What is the proof? Is it by a sound, or a form, or some other sign?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Everything is a sign from God. Everything tells His story. Anything man 'creates' does not move. But what is created by God does move.

We can only analyze things that have already been created. We are incapable of creating anything new, anything that has not already been created. For instance, we can take a sperm (which God has created) and join it with an ovum (which God also created) and thus 'create' an embryo. In so doing, we can create a pregnancy, but only by joining one already-existing seed with another. We can create electricity too, but only by extracting the current that already exists within water. We can also put the rays of the sun (which God also created) to various uses.

All created things tell His story. Everything is a sign of His power, a proof of His existence. If we want to understand this, we need the appropriate state of wisdom, a wisdom that is beyond intellect. It is with that wisdom that we need to reflect. But let us put this aside for the moment.

A sign or proof that God does exist is present right within us. Suppose you feel anger, or rancor, or doubt, or suspicion toward someone, and you hurt that person, maybe even strike him. And suppose that person goes away without retaliating in any way, saying to himself, "O God! You are aware of everything. The responsibility is Yours. You are the witness. It is You who has to inquire into this." Then, after he leaves, a warning voice arises from within you, the one who caused the hurt, saying, "What you did was wrong. You scolded him, but he did not scold you in return. You beat him, but he did not strike you in return. Wasn't what you did wrong? Was it

not a transgression of justice? Reflect on this and you will see. Even though you scolded and beat him, he did not attack you in return, but bore it up patiently and went away. You did not think before you acted. Just because of your suspicion and anger, you hit him."

So, something speaks within you, telling you to reflect in this way and to ask that person for forgiveness. This something warns you and makes you realize what you have done. It explains the consequences. This thing within acts as a witness. That is God. The person you hurt handed over the responsibility to God and walked away. So God then comes from within you and admonishes you. Reflect on this. That witness is right within us. This is the first point.

Next, suppose we deny the existence of God. For instance, Stalin said there was no God and established communism. But later he developed a tumor, and when he was suffering, as death was approaching, he shouted, "My God!" From where did the impulse come to make him say this? Here was a man who denied the existence of God, but when he was suffering he shouted, "My God!" Yet he claimed he did not accept God. God was not a part of his thinking. So where did that word come from? From within him. It resides within as a Power, without body or form, without race or caste or religion, without differences of color, or the distinction between 'I' and 'you'. That Power looks on everyone as equal. It judges with compassion and love. When danger threatens, it is that Power that makes a person shout, "My God!" As soon as it creeps into our wisdom, it instructs us and makes us aware. That is the proof—it lies right within us. Even though we do not see it on the outside, that cautioning emerges from within us, does it not? That is the proof.

MALE PHYSICIAN: Could Bawa please explain the difference between what would be considered sexual lust and what would be considered normal sexual attraction between a man and woman in a marital state.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Ah! That is very good! Human beings feel sexual enjoyment. Other creatures possess it too—snakes, scorpions, etc. All creations, even bees and insects, play these sexual games.

Now when we go to the bathroom, we close the door and perform our acts of nature (urination or defecation) in privacy, unseen to other eyes. If we have wisdom, that is how we will do it. But a crazy person, a madman who lacks wisdom, will relieve himself right out in the open. He will even take off his clothes and stand naked in the street. For such a man, feces is as tasty as rice! He will eat either.

But how will a human being who has wisdom behave? He will realize which situations require him to control himself. Unless his wisdom falters or fails him, he will hold fast to his virtue and good conduct.

Even if sexual desire surges up in him, he will control it. Only when the time is right and the conditions are appropriate will he approach his wife with decorum and fulfill his desire. He will do this in the way of a human being. Placing his faith in God, he will pray to God, reflect on God, and join with his wife with dignity and good conduct. If a human being can act with this kind of restraint, that is the proper way to perform the sexual act.

But if he goes outside the bounds of these codes of behavior—if he jumps with the force of a lion, or twirls around like a snake, or bites the nose and neck and tongue like a monkey, or rolls over and over like a bear or donkey or horse—these are the acts of animals. And a child conceived from such acts will be born with the nature of those animals, for it is that nature that will be photographed by the inner camera (to be printed out as the child's form).

Therefore, if he will subdue and control his emotions and consummate his act with restraint and dignity, the result will be good. On the other hand, if he has arrogance and lets his force exceed the bounds and his desire become uncontrollable, that is just lust. If his desire mounts beyond the control of his wisdom, that is what is called lust. What he does with restraint, in the manner described earlier, is the normal sexual act. That is the proper way. That is what is expected of him. But to do it on the street, or in the park, or on the beach, or under a tree, or wherever he feels like it, without being able to control himself—that is blind lust. It is said that lust has no eyes. When lust sees exposed breasts or scanty clothes on the backside, desire mounts and becomes uncontrollable.

When a bull sees a cow grazing, it is overcome with lust and will start licking its backside, and the cow will then urinate. The bull

sucks the urine and relishes the warmth. That is the way of an animal. If a female dog is in heat, a hundred male dogs will be around it, one near the head, one on top of it, one under it, and a few at the rear. The male dogs are so overcome with lust that they don't even have the eyes to see where they should approach the female. Such is the lust of the dog of desire. This is animal lust—no eyes, no wisdom. If this state prevails in a human being, he will act with no restraint, like an animal.

So, if a man lets his desire exceed the bounds of his wisdom, that is lust. If, however, he can check and control his emotions so privacy and decorum can prevail, that is the correct way.

Now, take a person who eats many different kinds of meat, perhaps the flesh of a bull, a pig, a snake, a dog, or an ass. He should eat his meat in a place where people usually eat, then rinse his mouth and wash his hands like a human being, and then leave. If, on the other hand, he carries that meat around on his head or shoulders or back, people seeing him will wonder what kind of man is this.

Similarly, if a man, having had his sexual enjoyment, were to come out of the house with his genitals hanging out and his backside bare, he would be considered crazy. Thus, a man must do each thing in the proper place, under the proper circumstances, and then he must emerge clean and respectful. That is the way of a human being, the way of a man of wisdom. Then there will be no bad smells. But if you emerge exposing yourself, it will emit a bad smell. Even animals do not do this. We have to understand this. This is the act called lust. If you act with wisdom, you will join with your wife in the proper manner, with good conduct, and come forth clean and respectful. That will be the normal way.

Doctors in particular should be aware of this, for they often have the opportunity to see the body and backsides of women. So they must have a lot of self-control, lots and lots of it. Because they see the entire body including the backside, they have to be extremely careful. If doctors can control themselves, it will be good, but if their control is not strong, they will be like the male dogs in heat who have seen a bitch.

When a doctor is examining or treating a woman, whether a sister or a woman giving birth, the doctor's eye and his love must look at her as if she were his daughter, or even as he would look at a baby.

Then he would feel just as he would if he were cleaning the baby's backside, or changing her clothes, etc. That is how his eyes should see, and that is the feeling he must have. His thoughts must not go beyond that. Only then is he a true doctor. If he is like a father or a brother to the patient, he will never go wrong. Otherwise, his treatment will go wrong, his life will go wrong, he will lose the respect of the patients, and there will be trouble in his family life. His balance will be off between good and bad. Those who are doctors must remember this. The greatest control has to be on the part of the doctors.

Lust is blind. Whenever the mind sees something, it will pounce onto it, lust will follow, and sexual passion will result. That must be controlled.

PHYSICIAN: When we walk down the street nowadays, the women are running around essentially naked. There is a certain amount of normal sexual attraction, I think, that a man should or would feel, for a woman who is partially unclothed. Short of, you know, I am not going to grab her on the street. What is a wise man to think?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Take the case of an animal. The entire body is naked. But, every animal has been given a tail, and with that tiny tail it keeps its private parts covered. Only at the proper time will it raise its tail. Even animals use a tiny bit of cloth (a tail) to keep themselves covered. Now the human animal, even though the rest of the body may be naked, also uses a tiny cloth to keep that area covered. So shouldn't you observe that her private parts are being covered and protected by that 'tail' of hers? Should you not realize this and go your way? Even an ordinary human being must say, "That place is being hidden by the tail," and go away.

Now, if I were going that way, I would not be looking up or down at the body. I would be looking only at the heart. That is the place I must see, and that is what I would be looking at. I do not waste my time looking up or down. If a person looks up and down at the body, he is not a man of wisdom. What a man of wisdom has to see is the point in the center of the person. That place contains a secret. He will look at only that and go on his way. If he focuses only on the point he needs to see, he will not be affected by desire, lust, or hypnotic fascination. He will not see her as a woman and himself as a man. He will not notice any difference. Nothing like

that. He will not peer at her to determine, "Is it a woman? Is she scantily dressed? Is her backside exposed?" And so on. That is ignorance and lust. If he sees the real point he needs to see, he will not notice those other things. So, whoever we come across, we must look at only the heart and then go on our way. That is victory for a man of wisdom.

After all, there is a tail concealing that place. The woman has covered herself with a tiny tail above and a tiny tail below, just as a cow keeps itself covered. Both do the same thing, so why should you be fascinated and desire this? You see this on the streets and a cowboy sees the cow on the farm. The cow keeps that place hidden and lifts its tail only when the need arises. The woman too will uncover it only when necessary. You must reflect on this a little.

I wrote about this in the book called *Maya Veeram* or *The Forces of Illusion,* in the year 1942. In times to come, the twelve yards of cloth[1] that a woman uses to cover herself will gradually be shorter and shorter, from twelve yards to ten to eight, then six to five. Later it will be three yards, then two yards, then one, and finally end up as one-eighth of a yard. In other words, only a loincloth will remain. All the rest will vanish. This is what I wrote in 1942 about the state of things to come. I said that a person will be able to see everything exposed. Only when something is kept covered does one need to open it and look to see what is under it. Whenever something is hidden, we want to open it to see what is concealed. But when everything is out in the open, there is no need for inquisitiveness, because everything is already uncovered and can be seen at once. There is nothing left to find, except the openings from which urine and blood issue forth. What use is there in looking at those? What fascination can there be in that? A man also passes urine and germs. He has urine and blood and a bad smell there too. It is the same for him as for a woman. So they both must cover their parts and go their separate ways.

So desire has to be curbed. A man of wisdom must think about this and say, "Wherever I look, this is what I see, so I don't need to

1. Twelve yards of cloth: a *sārī.* In some parts of the world, instead of dresses, women wrap around themselves long lengths of cloth, called *sārīs.* Nowadays even *sārīs* are only five to six yards long, instead of twelve yards.

keep looking." When something is covered and hidden, the natural desire is to open it and peek. Once it is left open, the value dwindles. Its worth goes down, and the respect one has for it also diminishes. When something has lost its value, why would you want to see it? It is a worthless commodity.

Doctors especially must think of this. Doctors, *gurus,* teachers, all of them must think of this. If there is something valuable, something covered and protected, look only for that. Why waste your time on something exposed and worthless?

ABRAHAM BAUMAN: I would like to ask Bawa Muhaiyaddeen about the correct way to repent *(taubah).* Is it enough to ask forgiveness from God directly, or do we have to ask forgiveness from the person that we feel that we have wronged? And what if the person does not feel it was wrong, but we know in our hearts that we have done something wrong?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: First of all, God is the witness, the One who sees, the One who hears, and the One who passes judgment. So you must say, "My God! What I did was wrong. Please forgive me." In this way, you need to hand over the responsibility to God and then go ask forgiveness from the person you think you have wronged. Say, "Please forgive me for the wrong I did to you."

ABRAHAM: But what if he says, "You did not do anything wrong toward me"?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: All you need to do is seek forgiveness. The matter finishes there. If he says he has not been wronged, then he is in the station of God. No matter how many faults may be committed against God, He always says, "You have not wronged Me at all. Whatever you did was to yourself. You are harming only yourself, not Me. You are squandering what you have earned. You have simply spent the profits from your earnings." This is what God will say. So, one who has true faith in God is going to say exactly the same thing, "You have done no harm to me." And this means that he has established a connection with God.

Each one uses up his own earnings. God is not to blame. He

will ask, at the time of reckoning, "What were your profits? What were your losses? What have you brought with you?" If you go empty-handed at the end, having squandered your earnings here, He will ask, "Where are your earnings? What did you do with them?" If you have spent it all here, it will be difficult for you to earn a place there. You will be a homeless person there. But if, with your earnings here, you build a house for yourself, you will have a home when you go there. If you seek and find the treasures while you are here, you will be blessed with unlimited wealth there.

QUESTION: Bawa Muhaiyaddeen says anger is not right, but sometimes I feel anger. I know it is not right. I would like to know what to do when I feel anger.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: When a bull gets angry, when it is in the frenzy of anger, what does it do? It snorts and butts its head against a tree, or a rock, or on the earth. If an elephant gets angry, it kicks the earth loose with its foot, then draws the dirt into its trunk and squirts it all over itself. Have you not seen this? Like that, if you get angry, give yourself a slap on one cheek and then the other, and the anger will cool off.

ABDUR RAHMAN CRUMPTON: Three weeks ago, I had a dream of a lady. Half of her face was charred black. She wouldn't leave my apartment and I kept trying to chase her out. The next morning I woke with a very bad virus that lasted four days. I would like to know who that woman was or what she stood for.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Your duties, your actions, your prayers, your intentions, your search—you have not kept these steadfast. The meaning of the blackened face is that you are consorting with spirits and demons like her. They inhabit your mind. This means that your mind is wandering to various places and establishing relationships with these kinds of things. You are becoming more involved with these than with your duty, your prayer, your actions, or truth. This is why that demon came to you. That is, it was one of the demons in your mind, a demon that scorches and burns. That form is one

of your thoughts. Every thought or idea we have can take a form like that. Every bad thing can take a form. If we make friends with one of these and later fail to give it what it wants, it will take such a form and come upon us. If you put meat in front of the dog you are raising and then attempt to take that meat away, it will growl and bite you. Similarly, if you raise one of these thoughts within you and then stop feeding it, that is what it will do.

So, if you can send away these things you have been raising and instead bring in God's things, this will not happen. That is what the illness that came to you was. What came to you was a spirit, a demon. You must clear away what is now within you and place God within. Place truth within. Place God's qualities and actions within. Place God's conduct within. Then anything that tries to come into you will automatically get burnt up. If there is light, darkness cannot stay there. If fire is there, ghosts and demons will not come, and if they should come, they will get burnt. If there is wisdom, sin cannot creep in. If there is faith in God, agitation of the mind cannot come. Not even gales can upset you.

No agitation of the mind can overturn the firm rock that is true faith. If you can realize this and act accordingly, you will find it helpful. Make your faith firm. Then those other things will leave on their own.

July 27, 1979

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Session 11

QUESTION: I pray in a Catholic group. Is that all right?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: I do not know about such things. I am only a student. I have not yet understood about God. I am still learning. My child, we have to understand who God is, and in order to understand God, we need God's beneficent qualities.

God does not discriminate between races, religions, or scriptures. He has no form or image. He does not acknowledge any separation based on color, or distinguish between black and white, or between my race and your race. He is one God, the One who created all lives, the One who feeds all lives, the One who dispenses judgment. He is the One who created Adam and Eve (ﷺ).

God is the One who created all things. It is He who created the sun, moon, and stars, the day and the night, good and evil, truth and falsehood—all these were created by Him as pairs of opposites. By learning about them we can come to know Him. This is our purpose in life.

To all lives God shows compassion, not anger. He has no anger. He never hurts anyone. With compassion, He feeds all His creations, even the ants, insects, worms, and atoms.

God created 124,000 prophets, and throughout the ages, He sent them to the world to proclaim His glory and to remind all those who had forgotten Him. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Moses, David, Jesus, and Muhammad, as well as Isaac, Idris, Job, Jonah, Joseph, and Solomon (may the peace of God be upon them all)—He sent them all to remind us of what we had forgotten—that there is only one God. He is that one God. To understand this should be our prime focus and intention.

He has three thousand gracious qualities and ninety-nine sovereign powers, which are the basis for His actions and conduct. And through His love, these things captivate all beings. It is His qualities

and duties that are His miracles, not things such as flying in the air, or bending the sky into the shape of a bow,[1] or walking on water, or walking on fire, or moving about invisible to other eyes. These so-called supernatural feats such as flying in the sky or entering invisibly into another body are just magical control of the elements—insignificant acts performed by beings that are His creations. After all, do not germs and viruses and atoms enter our bodies invisibly, without our seeing them? When they creep in, we are not even aware of them. Nor can we see the many microscopic things that abound in water. Birds fly in the sky, fish can 'walk' on water, and there are creatures that live in fire. These things are not great wonders. They are ordinary actions performed by God's creations. Human beings do yoga exercises and adopt various positions, but these same postures are assumed by snakes, reptiles, and birds in their day to day life. Can these be called miracles?

Snakes live on air. The crane stands on one leg for many hours until the desired fish comes along. White ants burrow into the earth and live underground for long periods of time. Monkeys swing from tree to tree all the time, hanging from the smallest of twigs, yet we gasp in wonder when circus acrobats do it. These cannot be called miracles.

The acts God's creations perform are not miracles. We see such acts all the time in the ordinary behavior of animals, birds, reptiles, snakes, and poisonous creatures. For instance, the snake holds its breath and hangs upside down. Monkeys somersault and stand on their heads. So, when man strives so hard just to imitate what animals do naturally, that is a wonder indeed. Man should reflect on this with wisdom. These are not wonders. They are not miracles.

There is only one thing that is a miracle—God's love and His beneficent qualities. It is through these qualities that He shows His love to all things. When we look at His actions, we are forced to exclaim, "My God!" They are the real miracles. His qualities are the real miracles. His love is His miracle, the love which makes all lives pay obeisance to Him. His compassion reminds us of His love. His quality of considering all lives to be as precious as His own and

1. Bending the sky into a bow is an image found in the Hindu *Purānas.* It refers to seemingly supernatural feats.

looking upon all religions as equal is His miracle.

He keeps all lives within Him, yet He also dwells within all of them, serving them with His love and His merciful qualities, reminding, warning, cautioning the conscience, giving explanations to the wisdom, protecting with His love. That is the miracle. That is God.

If we were to acquire His qualities, that would be a miracle. It would be the most exalted attainment for us. To perform His duties would be a miracle. To serve all lives and to nurture them and embrace them with love would be an even greater miracle.

The One who is called God has no form or body. He has no color, no wife, no children, no blood ties, no pride, no selfishness, no anger, no sin, darkness, torpor, lust, obsessions, hastiness, wrath, or bigotry. God is One of tolerance, compassion, and peacefulness. He is not subject to sleep or wakefulness. He has no birth or death. He is beyond the beginning and the end. He is the original Natural Power. He is not the sun or moon or stars or any lights that we see with our eyes. He is not anything that we can see or experience. He is beyond mind and desire. He is a Power that dwells as the wisdom within man's wisdom. That Power is God, and we have to become aware of it within us. We must establish the miracle of His qualities within us. That is what we must do.

QUESTION: The Lord has given me the gift of tongues, which speak to me in different languages. I was wondering if Bawa could understand it.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: I do not know about languages, but I know a little about God. I know Him. I know where He dwells, and I know the beauty of that place. I can perceive the beauty of anyone in whom He may be dwelling, and once I see that beauty, I know for certain that God resides there. So, although I do not know about languages, I know that Treasure, and I know its beauty. In this way I know a little of where He resides.

My child, there was a *guru* who had a disciple. That disciple studied very hard at the feet of the *guru.* One day, when he felt he had completed his studies, he asked the *guru,* "Oh my teacher, my

guru, my *shaikh,* I have studied everything, haven't I? Now I feel I must go and teach the people what I have learned. Please give me your permission."

The *guru* said, "It is true you have learned well. But you are not yet mature, you have not really reached that station yet. Stay awhile and study some more."

After some time, the disciple again asked, "Please give me permission to go out into the world and practice what I have learned. I am really capable of it now. I really want to do it."

Again the *guru* said, "My son, you have not yet reached that station. You need to study more." But the disciple could not abandon the idea and kept on insisting. Still the *guru* continued to say, "Not yet. I cannot give you permission to go out and preach. I have taught many things to you, but you still have not reached that maturity."

The disciple kept on begging, "Give me permission, and then you will see to what degree I have learned and will praise me for it."

Finally, because of the trouble the disciple was causing, the *guru* told him, "All right. Go and do as you like."

So the disciple went off on his own and recited a certain mantra, and a jinn appeared before him.

The jinn asked him, "What is your wish?"

"I want a palace of gold and silver that sparkles with gems, a palace the likes of which the world has never seen." The jinn answered his wish instantly and then asked, "What else would you like?"

"I want all the land surrounding this palace cleared and made into flower gardens and fruit orchards. A beautiful fragrance must come from this garden, and the flowers should be a golden color," the disciple said.

Instantly this was granted by the jinn, who then asked, "What else do you wish?"

"Fill the palace with golden plates, studded with gems such as have never been seen before."

That, too, was immediately granted, and again the jinn asked, "What else do you wish?"

"In order that I may never be hungry, you must fill the palace with all kinds of food, vegetables, rice, flour, sugar, everything."

It was done at once, and the jinn asked, "What more do you need?"

"Now fill my palace with gold, silver, gems, and treasures," the disciple commanded. That too was done in an instant, and the jinn asked, "What must I do next?"

The disciple then said, "I want a bride, the most beautiful in the world. She must possess a beauty the likes of which the world has never seen." Without delay, the jinn brought such a bride.

Finally the man said, "Now I have everything I want. I don't need you any more."

But the jinn insisted, "Tell me what else you need. I must be kept busy every moment. You have summoned me, and if you don't give me work, I must kill you."

"I told you I have everything I need. I don't need anything else," the disciple told him.

The jinn became insistent. "Give me work! You must give me work every moment. If you don't, I will kill you. I am not one who can be idle."

Then a thought struck the disciple and he said, "The only thing that I don't have is the gem which is to be found inside a king cobra's mouth. Bring me that gem."

The jinn agreed but threatened him, "As soon as I return you must give me more work. If you don't, I will kill you."

As soon as the jinn left, the disciple ran to his *guru* and pleaded, "Oh my *guru,* please help me! That jinn is going to kill both my bride and me. You have to help me!"

But the *guru* answered, "You said you had reached a state of maturity, that you knew everything. So you should know what to do. Just keep on giving work to the jinn."

"Oh my *guru,* the jinn has already given me everything I need. There is no more work I can think of to give him. Now he will kill me."

"You have to give him work," the *guru* said. "You must keep him busy. You said you had attained that high state. Certainly you can think of something."

In the meantime, the jinn had brought the gem. "Here. Now give me more work!" he demanded. The disciple did not know what to do. Just as the jinn was about to spit fire from his mouth to kill him, the disciple shouted, "Oh my *guru,* please help me! Please help me!"

Then the *guru* appeared and said, "My son, haven't you reached that station? You left me, saying you were mature. Now you are crying out for my help. After getting yourself entangled in all this, who can help you? You have brought this problem upon yourself, therefore you must solve it. This is where your maturity has brought you."

The disciple fell at his feet, wailing and shouting. The *guru* looked at him and said, "If you had truly reached that stage of maturity, you would never have asked for the things you did. You would never have asked for a wife, or gold, or a palace. You would not even have had the desire for such things. You would have asked only for God. It is the very things you requested that are going to kill you, not the jinn. Your wealth is going to kill you, the earth is going to kill you, the wife is going to kill you. All the things that you have obtained are what will kill you. This is hell. If you had really reached a mature state, you would never have asked for what you did. I warned you to wait. I told you that you were not yet ready, that you still had more to learn. Now you will have to die."

Then the disciple said, "I don't want any of these things. O my *guru,* please protect me."

The *guru* looked around and saw a dog with a curly tail, and he said to the disciple, "All right. Tell the jinn to straighten the coiled tail of that dog." So the disciple commanded the jinn to do that.

The jinn straightened out the tail and then let go, but the tail sprang right back into a coiled position. He tried again and again to keep the tail straight, holding on to it at both ends, but every time he let go, it immediately curled up again.

Finally the jinn ran away, because he could not complete his task. Whenever a jinn is faced with a task it cannot accomplish, it vanishes from sight.

Then the disciple looked around for the treasures the jinn had brought him, but everything had disappeared. His bride was gone, the palace was gone, the gold was gone, the gems were gone. Everything was gone. There was nothing left. All the things of the world he had been given were mere illusions.

The *guru* nodded and said, "My son, do you see how everything has disappeared? They were only the products of your dreams. The treasures received by you in a state that lacked understanding were all a dream, a dream that was going to kill you. What you had learned

lacked completion and was of no use to you. Come back and study some more with me. Wait until you reach a state of true maturity."

Then the *guru* explained, "My son, the coiled tail of the dog is your mind and desire. It is the dog of desire in you that wanted the world and made you ask for all this. That is what you nurtured within you. Give that dog back to the jinn. It has a coiled tail that can never be straightened. Continue learning until you are mature and bring your mind to a state of stability. Then you will not ask for the world. You will not follow the bidding of the dog of desire."

QUESTION: When someone goes to college and he has to choose between a large number of courses, how can he focus on what he really should learn and then go about learning it?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Are there so many different kinds of study?

TRANSLATOR: Yes. There may be ten or twelve different choices available.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The world, all these studies, and our life are all within us. Heaven and hell are within us. Because they exist within us, there is a point we have to bear in mind. Is it the world we want?

Now, God created the chicken. Did the chicken bring its food with it when it came into the world? No! It did not carry any food with it. So what does it do? It scratches the earth, and as it does it finds its food. It does not have to go here and there in search of food. It has merely to scratch the soil right where it is, and it will get its food. Wherever it may go, there will be food for the chicken. How does it obtain its food? Through its faith, its feet, and its effort.

Does the ant have a stash of food somewhere? No. Its faith, its initiative, and its intellect enable it to locate food and then acquire it. If there is sugar somewhere, the ant's sense of smell leads it to that place and its sense of touch helps it to gather the sugar and eat it. Isn't this what the ant does? Such tiny creatures can do that much.

And look at the termite, the white ant. What does it do? It burrows into the earth and then builds a house that will protect it

from being destroyed by the sun's heat or by winds or storms. It does so by digging down, mixing its own saliva with the soil, carrying the moist clay to the surface, and then arranging that clay, layer by layer, to build an anthill.

During this process, the termite, while chewing the soil, extracts the silver, iron, copper, lead, and gold from it. And the earth that remains is what the termite brings up to the surface to use in constructing a house of numerous tiny compartments with multiple holes of entry. The elements it separated off are then deposited in these tiny rooms to be used as its food. The termite lives, eats, and multiplies in those tiny rooms in the huge anthill it built.

Observe the subtlety with which the tiny termite extracts the five elements from the soil! Then it later feeds on those essences to grow and reproduce. A mere termite can do so much! It can burrow into the earth, separate the elements, and mix the earth with its own saliva to build a house for itself. If we too can burrow into our body made of the five elements and sift out the five beautiful qualities of patience, inner patience *(sabūr),* contentment *(shakūr),* trust in God *(tawakkul),* and giving all responsibility to God *(al-hamdu lillāh)*— if we can extract these, reflect on what our duties are, and perform those duties correctly—then we can live wherever we find ourselves. Without causing pain to anyone, we can extract what we need from the earth (which is our body), make our living without stealing from others, and earn our livelihood without killing or even hurting others.

The ant did not need to kill anyone, nor did the termite. In this vast world, God has spread out our food in plenty. Using the tools of faith, determined effort, and wisdom, we can obtain what we need for our lives, just as the termite did.

To do so, we must have that thing called faith, faith that God is the One who knows. We must realize that the 'I' cannot do it, only He can. What is called 'I', the ego, must die, and He must act in its place. As long as He is the actor, everything will turn out right. But as long as the 'I' remains, our actions will not reach fruition, because the 'I' is not just a single entity. Each 'I' is made up of four hundred trillion, ten thousand monkeys, donkeys, horses, foxes, elephants, lions, tigers, snakes, rats, and countless numbers of things within us which keep driving us, saying, "Go here, go there. Do this, do that. That is good, this is good, this is better." But none of these will come

out right. Why? Because these are the waves of the mind, the waves of agitation in the ocean of illusion. Each one will speak in its own tongue; each one will give forth a different sound. The mind can take many forms. It can be like a baby, or like an old woman, or a young maiden, or a seductress with beguiling speech, or it can be *māyā* (illusion), or a jinn, or a devil, or a dog, or a donkey hauling the world on its back, or a bull plowing and toiling.

When we go on our journey, we should not take this baby of the mind with us. It will ask for whatever it sees and go on crying until we buy it that thing, but as soon as we give it what it cries for, it will throw that away and cry for something different. Thus it keeps howling and asking for new things all the time. That is its nature.

The world is merely a stage for our dramas, and all of us in the world are actors on that stage. Whatever we are wearing is only make-up, and as long as we keep admiring these make-ups, the mind will keep asking for one make-up after another. It will ask for learning, it will ask for titles, it will ask for beauty, for love, for food. It will keep crying and wailing for more and more things. Suddenly it will appear in the form of a seductress, enticing us into making love to her. "Look at my beauty, look at my eyes, look at my dress," she will say, or, "You need a good wife."

In this way the mind will keep on crying and crying, all the while asking for one thing or another. It is just a baby. Giving it what it asks for will never stop it from crying. There is only one thing that can stop it—God, the one thing that mind and desire have never seen. We must give it that Treasure.

That is God. Within that everything should be contained. You must obtain that Power and present it to the mind. That is the mysterious Treasure—God, the one point. The moment the mind sees that Treasure, it will throw away everything else and keep looking only at that. It will turn it this way and that, and each time it will see a different wondrous secret. If you can obtain that one Treasure and give it to the mind, then, as it keeps on turning that Treasure, it will be totally absorbed in it, and will leave you free to do your work in peace. Just as you might give a mirror to a monkey to keep it occupied, you must give this one point to the mind. Only on that day will you be free to do your work.

As for the food for the five elements, if you place your faith and

certitude in God, then, whenever you make the effort, you will find your food wherever you may dig. That is the secret. So do it that way.

Any other questions, my children?

Anyone who passes by the skunk has to close their nostrils. It has a foul smell, but the skunk is not aware of its own stench. Others know it stinks, but the skunk does not know. It is quite happy with the smell that clings to its body. If the skunk were to become aware of its foul odor, it would say, "I can't bear to live like this. This smell is so unbearable, I cannot live with it," and peel off its skin. But because it is not aware, the skunk walks about waving its tail happily, thinking how pretty it is, with its black and white stripes.

The mind is just like that. If you knew its stench, you would strip it away and peel it off completely. If we realized our faults and our stench, we would peel them off saying, "I do not want any of this." But because we are not aware of how dirty the smell is, we try to give that smell to others. When we do this, they are compelled to flee in fear. This is not good. We must first get rid of our own stench. We must peel it away. Think about this.

QUESTIONER: May Allah help me to do that.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: My child! It is very easy to say things, but to do what you say is very difficult. The tongue is not afraid of hot water, not even very hot water, not even of fire. It will blow on the hot drink and then drink it without fear. It is also not afraid to say anything. Just as nothing can restrain the monkey of the mind from jumping around, the tongue will say whatever it wants to. You must think before you speak. You must restrain your tongue. You must tell it, "Think about the good and bad of it before you speak. Otherwise do not speak." Think about that.

One day at God's command, Saint Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen (رضي الله عنه)[2] (who now lies buried in Ajmer) was going toward northern India to establish *īmān* (absolute faith in the one God) in the hearts of the

2. Hazrat Khwāja Mu'īnuddīn Chishtī (رضي الله عنه) (1142-1236). A great Sufi saint, who was responsible for the spread of Islam throughout India.

people. He was told to teach them wisdom and bring them to a good state. As he entered Delhi, he passed by a fruit orchard adjacent to the king's palace. Among the many kinds of fruit in that garden were delicious, ripe, beautiful, fragrant pomegranates. Some were so ripe and full they had split open, displaying the beautiful red pearls inside. When Chishtī, Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen ﵀ saw this, a desire for the fruit rose in him, so he went stealthily to pluck the fruit. But the guard noticed that someone was trying to steal the king's fruit and went toward him. When Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen ﵀ saw the guard, he moved away. But his mind would not let him leave. As soon as the guard's back was turned, he again crept toward the fruit. But the guard saw him again and returned. After this happened a third time, Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen ﵀ gave up and left.

Later he was on his way to Ayōtthi. There was dense forest on both sides, and he was following a narrow footpath through it. The footpath led up to the top of a mountain, where he had to pass through a cleft in a rock before going down the other side. As he approached the cleft in the rock, he saw a thin, emaciated old man sitting there, blocking the path. His eyes were open but he was deep in meditation. Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen ﵀ saw a black wasp fly down and bite the old man's toe over and over again, but still the old man did not move.

After watching this for a while, Chishtī, Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen ﵀ said, "O venerable one! Please move so we can pass by." The old man was silent.

"Please give us room to pass," he repeated. The wasp continued to bite the old one's toe. Then Chishtī, Khwāja ﵀ said, "O man! O great one! What kind of prayer are you doing? What meditation are you doing, while blocking the path? You are awake. Yet a wasp is biting you on the toe again and again. Can't you drive it away and then go on with your meditation?"

Now the old one spoke, "Chishtī, Khwāja! There are other paths. You can easily go around to one of them!"

Khwāja ﵀ replied, "How can I go through? The forest is dense and there are thorny bushes. I can find no path."

"Is that so Khwāja? But this is my place. This is where I sit."

"How do you know my name?"

"I know you Khwāja, and I know what you carry with you! This

wasp is biting me only on one toe. Then it goes away. As for you, the entire world is stinging you, but you have not done anything about that. You are on your way to teach *īmān* to the people of Ayōtthi, but within you is the thought of eating what is not permissible for you. How many times did you go toward that pomegranate fruit in the palace garden of the Delhi *Badushāh?* Three times. I didn't do anything like that. You do not even know the difference between *halāl* (permissible) and *harām* (not permissible), yet you are on your way to teach *īmān.*

"In the place you are going to, there is a *munivar* (ascetic) called Visvāmithra, who is very adept at illusory tricks and black magic. He can bend the sky and show it to you like a bow. He can make the sky send down rain. He can poison the waters. He can manifest whatever your mind desires. Whatever fruit your mind is thinking about, he can produce it for you instantly. He reigns as a god to one group of people. He has brought everyone in that area under his control, and they are all praising and worshiping him. As a result, sacrifices of animals, women, and children are being done in these temples. By committing these murders and offering blood sacrifices, the people obtain boons from their deities.

"How do you plan to overcome one who has such powers of magic and illusion? This *munivar* has the ability to sink ships sailing in the ocean, by raising gales and storms or causing fires. He has destroyed many saints and illumined beings who headed for that land, and now God has sent you to overcome this *munivar.* But the *munivar* knows how you were tempted three times by one pomegranate fruit, and will manifest whatever fruit you desire. He can manifest both the tree and the fruit, but the fruit will be poisoned, and as soon as you eat it you will die. Khwāja, in your present state, the whole world is biting you. Instead of treating that, you are concerned with just one wasp stinging me on just one toe."

Thereupon Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen (رضي الله عنه) said, "O venerable one! You truly are a great being! What shall I do?"

"If you go in the state you are in now, you can never establish *īmān* there. You will not be able to open their hearts. Therefore, you must first understand the world that is within you. Stay right here for a while." Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen (رضي الله عنه) was by now clinging to the great one's feet.

"Stay right here in this place for twelve years, glorifying Allah. You must kill the world within you before you proceed on your mission." Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen (رضي الله عنه) fell at the great one's feet and worshiped him. When he rose up, the great one had vanished.

Khwāja Muhaiyaddeen (رضي الله عنه) stayed in that place for twelve years, until he overcame the world within him. After that, he proceeded to his destination, captured the *munivar,* destroyed the forces of illusion *(māyā sakthis),* and taught the people to have faith in the one God.

The world is also biting us constantly. If we want to kill this world, we have to pray and worship. Unless we have done this, we cannot go out to teach others. The world within us must die. Desire within us must die. The mind must die. Only love will win.

QUESTION: What is the meaning of the name you gave me (Ishāq)?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The meaning is that you should live as a human being, not like a donkey. It is a name that will make you live as a human being.

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Session 12

QUESTION: Can one gain enlightenment by oneself, or do we need guidance?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: In your life, first you drank milk from your mother, then from a bottle, holding it in your own hands. After that you started biting on everything you picked up. Then you began to crawl, then to play. So you were shown these things one by one, weren't you?

Next you went to school, where you had a different teacher for each grade. You had to be shown how to do each thing you were learning. You had to be helped at each stage. It was because of the help that you progressed. Still later you learned to drive and to get a job. You needed help with these things also, didn't you? You could not have managed all this by yourself.

If it were possible for enlightenment to be attained by one's own effort, all the animals in the jungle would have attained it, wouldn't they? Have they gone on to develop into human beings? And if a human being were to live in the jungle from childhood on, unless he had guidance, he would pick up the sounds of the animals and run around just like them.

Wisdom is something entirely different. It is a valuable treasure. It belongs to the realm of grace. We do possess wisdom, but it is buried deep within us, just as precious stones are buried deep within the earth. Now, an experienced person who knows the seven kinds of soil will know, by the signs on the surface and below, where the gems are. But as we dig, sometimes our efforts seem to be in vain, as if nothing is there. Nevertheless, we must persevere with the digging, and not get exhausted in body or mind.

As we go on digging, when we reach a certain depth, we will encounter many different-colored stones that shine like gems. They will appear to be precious gems, but when examined with the wisdom

of an experienced jeweler, it will be apparent that they are fake. Only one who knows gems will realize that we have to discard thousands of stones like these and dig deeper and deeper before we finally discover a true precious gem. Even though all the other stones appear to have the same brilliance and color, only one out of a thousand will have attained that precious state. Only a dealer with experience will be able to show you the true gem of great worth.

These other stones are the *swāmis* like me, the *gurus* and *yōgis* and seemingly wise beings, and the many scriptures we come across in the world. They are not the real gem. There is only one stone of value, and until you reach that one, you must continue the digging without loss of effort or spirit or faith. Only through that digging can you attain this rare thing called wisdom.

Therefore you do need help. You need the help of one who is a true *insān kāmil,* a perfected human being. Only with the help of such a one can we reach that point. We cannot do it by ourselves.

QUESTION: I would like to ask why Bawa Muhaiyaddeen does not speak in English. A translation is not as clear.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If the mind is clear, you will hear it clearly. Unfortunately, I can speak only in the language I know. If your mind is clear, if that meter is in good condition, the words will get imprinted directly and the recording will be clear. Then you might not need a translation.

God's language can be known by all lives. Every heart that needs God—animals, human beings, jinns, fairies, angels, heavenly beings—all of them can understand His language. The moment they need to hear Him, if they open their hearts, that sound will be heard and understood, and they will act accordingly. If we can keep our hearts open, the vibration that enters will speak directly through the microphone within us. If our tape is clean, the recording will be clear. So we must strive hard to keep that tape clean.

SUSAN SARAH WADLINGER: I was wondering if Bawa has given a description of the pictures he has done, so we can have them on a tape.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: God has made so many paintings. We are paintings drawn by God, paintings that move. The paintings on these walls do not move, but God's works of art can move. They move, they have sound, they speak, they eat. They do all these things, but the art work we do cannot move or speak. This is just a small explanation.

We, who are the art works of God, are paintings that can move. God has placed within His paintings that move all the explanations we need but we have not understood them. Until we understand these explanations, what is the use of giving explanations about paintings that cannot move? We must reflect upon this and understand the many explanations He has placed within us, we who are the paintings He created. If we can study these and gain a complete understanding—how much more exalted and purposeful that would be!

There is a *hadīth* (story) about Jesus (ﷺ) that is in the Qur'an and not in the Bible. The name mentioned is Jesus, but it could refer either to the son of Mary (ﷺ) or to a certain *gnāni,* a man of divine wisdom whose name was also Jesus.

Jesus (ﷺ), at the age of fourteen, gave up the world and went off to meditate. On his way he saw many beautiful wonders, and the thought came to him, "This world is such a wonder to behold. I must see it all. I must travel around the whole world and see all the wonders it holds."

As he walked along with this thought, he observed a very, very old woman. She was a horrible sight, disgusting to the eyes. Her face was pitch black and had burn-scars all over it, as though charred by fire. She wore a veil over her head to cover her face. Her clothes were of a hundred different colors, and one hand had multiple tattoos with more than a hundred different colors. The colors, the clothes, and the veil she wore caused people to become enamored the moment they saw her, even from a distance. They would fall down in a swoon, and she would pick them up and embrace them to herself.

Jesus (ﷺ) observed this. He went close to the woman and asked her, "Who are you? You are such a despicable sight! Why do you look like this? Why is your appearance so disgusting? I have not seen any woman as disgusting or evil, or anyone with all these colors! O woman who looks worse than hell, who are you?"

The woman replied, "O man! You look like a virtuous person! You are on a different kind of mission, so go your way. You need not wonder about me or concern yourself with this. You are a good person, so go. Why should you want to look at me? Whatever one wishes to see, that is what I am. You said you wanted to see the world. Well, that is what I am."

"Are you the world?"

"Yes! I am the world."

Jesus (ﷺ) could see that, for she was wearing all the jewels and ornaments of the world—gold, silver, and precious gems, a multitude of colors, and many other alluring things. Then Jesus (ﷺ) asked, "If you are the world, why do you hide your face? And why the hundred colors?"

She replied, "These colors are here to enchant those who look at me."

"Very well, but why do you have all the tattoos on your hands?"

"It is through the beauty of these hands that I draw people under my power."

"But why don't you show your face?"

"If they see my face, they will not desire me. Anyone who sees my face will run away, so I keep it hidden. But I use the colors and the hands to bring people under my spell."

"What is the meaning of the hundred colors?" Jesus (ﷺ) asked.

The woman told him, "I have a limitless number of husbands. These hands containing so many colors and tattoos of animal pictures embrace those husbands and draw them to me. Once I have embraced them, I kill them and drink their blood. That is what I do."

Then Jesus (ﷺ) asked, "Why is blood dripping from your hand? What does that mean?"

She said, "I draw them to me with the right hand and kill them. Then the blood I have sucked out of them drips from my left hand. This is my work."

Jesus (ﷺ) asked, "Isn't there someone more powerful than you who can conquer you or kill you?"

"No!" she replied. "I am the world. I am the *guru* for the entire world. There is no one who can do this job as well as I can. I entice these people, get them under my control, drink their blood, and let it flow out the other hand. This is what I do. I am the world. This

is what the world is. You expressed a desire to see the whole world. I am that world. If anyone were to see my face, they would not desire me at all. One who has wisdom will not want to look at me. One who has truth will not look at my face. One who is a devotee of God will not look at my face. One who has true faith and trust in God will not look at my face, because I am the world."

"Are you really?"

"Yes! I am indeed the world. This disgusting thing is the world. My job is to kill those who, not seeing my true face, succumb to the beauty of my colors and my hands. Every pore on my skin is a dragon with a vulture's beak, held wide open, out to devour you. They will kill you, let you rot, and then eat you. Every hair on my head takes the form of snakes and scorpions. These are my evil qualities, actions, and intentions. Whichever way you go, they will fly out and grab you, and if you try to run away, I will send the fire of *māyā* (illusion) to burn you and capture you. I am the world. I am what you wanted to see."

"Enough! Enough!" said Jesus (عم). "Now that I have seen this much of you, I do not need to see any more. I do not want to see the whole world. Thank you." And he went away without ever looking back. Once wisdom dawns in us, we too will realize this.

A similar story is told about Prophet Muhammad (صلعم). When he was on his way to meet with God *(Mi'rāj),* the world called *māyā* accosted him. As he walked along with Angel Gabriel (عم), they heard a sound coming from the north. An old woman was far off, her face charred black, but decorated with make-up and numerous colors and pastes. She had even more ornaments than the woman in the first story. Gold and silver adorned her ears, nose, eyes, and other places. She was draped in *sārīs* of a multitude of colors. They were made out of melted gold, silver, and cinnamon stone. This woman called out to the Prophet (صلعم), "O *Rasūl!* O Muhammad! *As-salāmu 'alaikum.* Where are you bound? I understand you are going on the *Mi'rāj* to meet with God. Please turn around and look at me. Look at my beauty. Look at my face. Look at my clothes."

As they heard these words, Angel Gabriel (عم) quickly warned, "*Yā* Muhammad! Do not turn and look that way! Do not reply to her questions! Come along."

After they had gone some distance, a similar sound came from a

southerly direction, *"As-salāmu 'alaikum*, O Muhammad! I understand you are on your way to meet with Allah!"

Again Angel Gabriel (ع) immediately cautioned, "Do not return the *salāms*, and do not look in that direction!" So they continued on their way.

After they had gone some distance, Muhammad (ﷺ) asked Angel Gabriel (ع), "Who was that woman? Her sound was so beautiful. Why did you tell me not to speak to her or look at her?"

Angel Gabriel (ع) replied, "She is *māyā,* the world. She is the one who entices true devotees of God and leads them to hell. She is the mother to hell. She is the world. Her qualities are the qualities that belong to hell. Her ornaments are all the evils existing on earth and all the sufferings existing in hell. Her speech and her sounds are made up of all the snakes, scorpions, centipedes, and poisonous creatures that can be found in hell. That is why I asked you not to look at her or speak to her."

"Then what was the sound that came from the left side?"

"That was satan, *mal'ūn,* the degenerate one who has gone astray, the enemy of God and of all true devotees of God, an enemy to those with wisdom and pure hearts, to those who have the faith called *īmān*. He tries hard in this way to draw people to hell. If you had spoken to him, he would have attached himself to us. That is why I told you not to respond to his greeting."

Children, if we can understand this with wisdom, we will never even look at this place.

They say that if a skunk were to become aware of the foul smell it emits, it would strip away its very skin. But because it is not aware of its own stench, it wears its skin proudly. In the same way, if we were to realize the stench that is within us, we would strip off this skin and this body and cast them far away. Just as the skunk's foul smell is known only to others but not to the skunk, the evil and foul-smelling things within us are felt only by those around us, not by us.

Do you understand? That is how it is. So, you need to look at the picture that moves. If you can understand that picture, it will be sufficient.

QUESTION: May I ask Bawa a couple of health questions?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: In life, what you need is faith. Even when you take your medicines, you must swallow them with faith. It is faith that gives you health. If you are taking a pill, you must do it with faith. If you take it without faith in the medication, it will not be beneficial. Therefore you have to trust what the doctor says. You need to have that sort of faith regarding the things connected to the world. Do not do anything without that faith. Concerning the body, you need faith in your medication, but concerning God, you need the faith that has understood the truth.

JOHN BARNETT: Is it more beneficial to live near the main Fellowship in Philadelphia than near the Fellowship branches in other cities?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It does not matter where you live. When the sun is in the sky, it shines equally everywhere. And if you have a magnifying glass in your hand, you can use it to make a fire, no matter where you are. As long as you have faith, determination, and *īmān,* it does not matter where you live.

But there is one thing you need to consider. If you have established a connection with the *shaikh,* your qualities will undergo a change, by virtue of that influence. However, if that connection is not made, you will begin to seek certain friends and form certain relationships, and the things of the world may attract you and draw you away from your remembrance of God. If such a break occurs, bad qualities will result.

This is why it is said that one must live with a *shaikh* for twelve years. However, it is not possible for everyone to attain that state. Only a few people may open their hearts and establish a connection with the *shaikh.* If they have attained that state, the *shaikh* will teach them how to control the twelve openings in the body. If you stay close to him, he will show you the methods to conquer those twelve worlds, one for each year. This is what is meant by living with the *shaikh* for twelve years.

But it does not matter where you live if you lack faith, certitude, and determination, and if you have not surrendered with an open

heart. Even if you live very close to where the *shaikh* resides, it will not benefit you. We have to reflect on this.

Therefore, no matter where you may be, first plant the seed called faith. If that seed sprouts in a healthy manner, it will be good for you. Unless that seed of faith has sprouted and grown within you, it will not benefit you to live near the Philadelphia Fellowship, nor will it benefit you to live in any other place. Wherever you may be, the one thing you need is faith.

HAJARAH (CATHY) DIDONA: I have many difficulties. Is it necessary for me to voice them in the form of questions or will you tell me about them yourself?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Whether you ask me or I tell you—both are the same, are they not?

HAJARAH: Since I have been here, I see more and more that I have bad qualities within myself.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: That may be so.

HAJARAH: Because of this, I do not like myself very much. And I think if I can't love myself, it is going to be difficult to love others. Some people say that I have to accept myself as I am. But I don't know how I can accept or love my bad qualities.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Who is the *guru* who told you this? You need to think a little. You see the qualities within you that are wrong, do you not? All right. What will happen if you put your hand into fire?

HAJARAH: My finger will be burnt.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Would you then realize that it was wrong for you to put your hand into fire? And would you put your hand into the fire again? You would not. So, couldn't you do the same with the things within that you know are bad?

HAJARAH: I seem to be going back into them.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You should not do that, should you?

A fire on the outside can burn you. But every one of these bad qualities is a fire inside you, the fire of hell. These qualities are going to take you to hell and burn you. As soon as you realize such a quality, you must drive it away, saying, "Get away, satan! Go away from me!" As soon as you see it coming, when you realize it is wrong, you must say, "Go away, satan!" With full faith and determination, you must say, "There is no connection between you and me. We have nothing to do with each other." In this way, each time a bad quality presents itself, you must recognize it with your intellect and drive it away.

When a herd of cattle is grazing, a bull may develop a sudden desire for the female and try to jump onto it. What does the cow do? It passes urine that is warm and tastes of acid. The bull in its desire, sucks that urine and makes a face because of the acid and the burning.

So, if a mere bull, after tasting that urine once, goes away in disgust saying, "This acid burns," should you not also understand?

After that, the bull may start licking the backside of the cow. There is a saying, "The bull that licks distracts the cow that is grazing." The cow is just grazing for food, but because cows sometimes have an itch on their backside, when the bull licks it, the cow may feel more comfortable due to the rasping caused by the sandpaper-like tongue of the bull. All the other cows will go on grazing, but this one stops grazing and stands still, enjoying the comfort caused by the licking. Because of this, the cow will forget to graze, and then when it's time for the herd to return from the pasture, the cow will be hungry and may have to go off to neighboring fields to steal some food. If caught, it will be beaten.

So go on with your grazing, instead of being distracted by the bull that licks. Do not stop grazing to enjoy the feeling caused by the bull that licks. Use your intelligence. If you do not, you will have to go out in the night to steal your food. Then you will be beaten. A smart cow will beat the bull away with its hind legs. You must use your wisdom to beat away any distraction.

So when those qualities try to lick you from behind, ignore them and continue grazing. Tell them to go away. Kick away those thoughts with your wisdom, just as the cow kicked away the bull with its legs. That is the clever thing to do. Do you understand? Use your intellect.

QUESTION: I want to study chiropractic. Also, I'm interested in healing without drugs.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: There is only One who can heal without using medication. That is God. If you become God, you can heal in that way. Otherwise, if you aspire to be a healer, you need forty or fifty brokers who will bribe a number of people to pretend they are blind or deaf or crippled or infirm. Then the brokers will advertise that you are a healer. Once the people are set up, you can start preaching and crying out, "O God! Shower Your grace on these poor wretches. Let Your power flow through this hand of mine and heal them." At that moment the so-called sufferers must rush up. Then you can rub the eyes of the fake blind man and hold up your fingers and he will be able to count them. Or the fake cripple will be carried to the stage, and you can rub his legs and he will rise and walk on his own. These are the kinds of tricks such people resort to in order to earn money and name and fame. But there is only One who can treat without medicine—my God. If you were to become God, you could do it too.

Do you think you can attain that state?

QUESTIONER: No.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: In that case, do not entertain such ideas. The very thought of being able to heal without the use of medicines is wrong. You cannot do it. So, learn about your life. Find employment for your livelihood and go on with your life. As you go along, learn about God's grace little by little. If you can acquire even one tiny drop of God's grace, that will be most valuable. If you can acquire just one of His three thousand gracious qualities and act upon that one, it will benefit you. Try to put into practice at least one of His ninety-nine compassionate duties and actions. That will help you a great deal. Do you understand?

QUESTIONER: I understand that, but can't healing be achieved by psychology?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Going out to bring comfort to poisonous snakes and tigers is not such a great idea. It might ruin your life and destroy you. I found it was not good for me. I studied this

psychology learning and I did not like it.

QUESTIONER: Why?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: I don't like it, but if you like it, you are free to go ahead. I went to study psychology. After my studies were over, I sat down to practice what I studied. I asked my patient, "How are you? How do you feel?" She replied, "My husband treated me this way. He did this and that to me. My mother did such and such to me. My husband made love to me in this way, caught me like this, and bit me here. He made me lie down, he made me sit up," and so on.

As all the people told their stories, I took it all into my mind. One had hysteria, one was crazy because of sorrow, one was crazy because of studies, another was crazy over love, another was crazy because she had no husband. At the end I almost went crazy. I had to take in all they told me and then repeat it back.

So one who practices psychology will ultimately become crazy. He will lose his own wisdom and say the very things he has been hearing from his patients. Day after day he is listening to hysteria and craziness and the speech of warped minds. He constantly thinks about what he has heard, whether he is lying down or sitting up. Finally he is overcome by it all and begins to relive what he has been hearing. He may imagine a pretty girl approaching him. Or if the psychologist is a woman, she imagines a nice young man. Sometimes the psychologist will imagine them with no clothes on the backside or even completely nude. When he sees these things in his mind, his wisdom becomes dulled.

There is a saying: "Lust has no eyes to see." If we hide our eyes from such sights, lust does not see them and it is easy. But if we uncover our eyes, lust overcomes us, and we will not only be ruined but also become crazy. Ultimately we lose the use of our own intellect and our own wisdom. This is the hell of hells. I saw all this, and ultimately my wisdom told me, "I don't really need this." So I released myself from it and escaped.

In this way I studied various things, and once I understood the essence of each learning, I moved on, because none of it seemed right to me. In the end what does all this bring? The psychologist himself ends up in a mental hospital. At first he only works at a mental clinic,

but one day he ends up as a patient in a mental hospital, unaware of anything. And if he escapes from there, hell is his destination. This is why I do not like psychology.

The only things I need are the qualities of God, the grace of God, and the wisdom of God—not any of those other things. I do not like them. I saw these things as I was emerging into this world. I was pushed through dirt and filthy smells, and I came out bawling. So, I saw it (the birth canal) then. I also chewed on the breast and drank the milk. I do not desire to see this again. I suffered enough during that journey. I saw it once and I don't want to see it again. That one-time suffering was enough for me. That kind of learning has no appeal for me. This is how I feel. But if you feel you want to try it, please feel free to do so. Do you understand?

QUESTIONER: I think so.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: This is similar to the story of Hasanul-Basrī (رضي الله عنه).[1] Walking by a lake with his friend Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah (رضي الله عنها)[2] he asked her, "Can you walk on water?" There was no reply. So Hasanul-Basrī (رضي الله عنه) began to walk on the water and turned to call out to Rābi'ah (رضي الله عنها), "What do you think of this?" But Rābi'ah (رضي الله عنها) was nowhere to be seen. So he called out her name.

Rābi'ah (رضي الله عنها) replied from high up in the sky, "Here I am. I am flying in the sky." Then she told Hasanul-Basrī (رضي الله عنه), "If you walk back to the shore, I will come down too. And as they walked along together, Rābi'ah (رضي الله عنها) told him, "You walked on water. That is what a fish does. I flew in the sky. That is what a bird does. But you have not realized what we have really come to this world to do. So let us give up the work of a mere fish or bird and try to find out what we have come here to do as human beings. These are not true miracles but the acts of tiny creatures. A fish ends up in the stomach of another creature, and a bird falls to its death if its wing becomes weak. Our true miracle is to realize ourselves, to discover who we are." So said Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah (رضي الله عنها).

August 1, 1979 A.M.

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1. See footnote, page 112.

2. See footnote, page 111.

Session 13

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Session 13

QUESTION: Bawa has spoken of the world as a dot. Surely God is not focusing His whole attention on this speck. He must be doing other things. What is He doing?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If God had ten people like you to watch over, that in itself would be enough work to keep Him occupied the whole day long, just dealing with all your craziness.

God has to take care of the eighteen thousand universes. It is not a big task for Him to look after all the other creations, but to look into the heart of the creation called man keeps Him very busy. Sometimes man is a monkey, sometimes a human being, sometimes an elephant, sometimes a cat, sometimes a snake, or a jinn, or a satan, or a demon, or a poisonous creature. So, looking after human beings keeps God constantly occupied. A human being goes here and there, wanting to bite or kill, and God has to go after him all the time to prevent him from doing that. So, if he has ten people like you in His charge, twenty-four hours are not sufficient. Quite apart from this He has a lot of other work to do.

If, however, those ten people transform themselves into true human beings, then His work will become easy and He will have enough time to deal with His other duties.

SUSAN SOLLEDER: Is it really such a big task for God to look after us?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: We mentioned ten people, but He has millions and millions to look after. That is why He has so much difficulty. We are giving Him a lot of work.

God has the power to accomplish anything within the blink of an eye. But the one thing He finds it hard to deal with is the monkey pranks we indulge in. Man changes every second. There are sixty

seconds in a minute, and man changes one hundred and twenty times in a minute. That is what makes it difficult for God.

God is the Almighty One. He has the power to create and to destroy. He is the One of perfect purity. He does not put His fingers into hell. But we are in hell, carrying hell on our heads. That is why it is difficult for Him to help us, because it may take a little time for Him to make the rain come down and wash us clean.

What else do you want to ask?

QUESTION: I was reading in the Qur'an today that there are three ways that are appropriate for God to speak to man: one is through a veil, another is through a messenger, and another is through inspiration.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: That could be so. It is certainly true. But you do not believe in His messengers, you do not believe in His revelations *(wahys),* and you do not believe in Him. Therefore, how can you communicate with Him? God says you can meet with Him in three different ways. But if we do not have any of these ways within us, how can we meet with Him?

An *insān kāmil* is a messenger from God, yet you do not believe in him. Prior to this time there were prophets, saints, *qutbs,* and *rasūls* who came. We did not believe in them. We did not believe in the prophets or in the words that came to them as revelations from God. So, how can we meet with God? If we would believe in any one of these and go along that path, it would be good, my son!

Who else? Please ask!

MICHAEL GREEN: When I hear someone say that God is doing this or finding it difficult to do that, it makes me uncomfortable, because God is being portrayed as an enormous man, not as something totally beyond our understanding.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: That too is correct.

After a dog defecates, it does not know how to wash itself. It licks its backside. Cleansing is needed, so the dog cleanses itself in this way. For a dog, this is right. Cattle or sheep rub themselves clean

by wiping with their tails. For them that is what is right.

Some human beings, after they defecate, just wipe themselves with toilet paper. That is right too, for them. But some people, after they defecate, use water to really cleanse themselves. Only then do they consider themselves clean.

Each creation, according to the state it is in, will do each thing in its own way. In accordance with the birth it has taken, in accordance with its habits, and in accordance with its state, it will act in a certain way. Such things determine the degree of its intellect, and thus the way it will conduct its life. So there is no fault in what they do.

But for one who is born as man, God has created water, and man will use that water to cleanse his body. Similarly, God has created subtle wisdom so man can wash his heart clean. Regarding this point, we need to consider whether everyone we see is truly a human being. Just because we see a human face, does it mean he is a human being? Not all are human beings. One who is truly a human being must have the qualities, actions, behavior, and the beauty of a human being. Once that beauty begins to shine in him, he will know God.

Such a man will not have this other section in him. He will not compare God to a giant or a fox or a cat. He will not see Him as anything that has limits. He will think of Him as a Power, vast and infinite.

So each creation, in accordance with its state, its qualities and actions, will cleanse itself in a way that fits it. For instance, the dog will give birth to young ones and give them milk, but it will also eat the feces that came from its backside. That is the state of its intellect, its wisdom, and its actions.

If we are human beings, we will understand the correct state of conduct, the state we must strive to attain, the state that is capable of knowing God. One who wants to know God will work hard to attain the wisdom that will help him do this. He will cleanse himself, cleanse his wisdom, cleanse his heart, and thus attain his objective.

Whatever each creation does is right for that creation. It is not at fault. We must understand this. Therefore, do not attempt to wash the backside of a dog, or it will pounce on you and bite you. And if you attempt to wash the backside of a cow, it will kick you and beat you with its tail. Each one demonstrates the actions natural to it.

That is the only way it can act. We should not concern ourselves with that. Each one should be free to act the way it wants.

MOON CONNELLY: How can I best lose my sense of self, my selfishness?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: This is a novel question. To answer this question, the brain has to be very clear. So you want to get rid of your selfishness! Good, my daughter!

We must reflect. Let us reflect on our life. We have been born, have we not? Out of the same kind of passage we were born from, others have also been born. All those who live in this world have been born from that same place. Since this is so, we must ask ourselves, "Where are all those people now who were born before we were? Are they alive now?" No, they are no longer in this world.

Yesterday we related a story about Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (رضي الله عنه),[1] who was a great king. In his palace all the plates, cups, and bowls were made of gold. Whenever he went out, he had a retinue of forty guards carrying forty golden staffs and forty golden swords. He wore a gold crown set with diamonds and gold robes decked with precious stones. There was no richer king in that time. Yet even though he lived in such pomp and magnificence, within him there was a spark of faith in God.

To have faith in God is the first step in getting rid of our selfishness. We must establish faith, determination, and certitude toward Him. We must impress in our hearts the belief that there is a God. We must reflect on this belief and have certitude in it. Having established this, we must think about what comes next.

You need to seek the company of a wise man. Through his qualities, his actions, his wisdom, and his explanations, he will provide you with certain understandings. You must take in those understandings. That wise man will tell you, "Other lives are the same as yours." He may take you past a butcher shop and show you a rabbit that has been skinned and hung up, and ask, "What is the difference between this body and yours? Does it not resemble the

1. See footnote, page 117.

body of a baby?" Or perhaps he will point out a deer or calf and say, "Look how the butcher has cut off two legs and hung it up to be sold."

He will show you such things and ask you, "Is there any difference between a baby and this body that is hanging there? What is the difference between a human being and this cut-up carcass? Look how it has been killed and then hung up to be sold." By looking at these things we will learn to feel compassion and pity for other lives and realize that these lives are no different from our own.

One day there will be a judgment by God upon us. As a result of our evil behaviors and actions and the killings and murders we take part in, we too will be skinned and hung up.

Therefore, you must learn to consider all lives in the same way you do your own life. Think about it. For how long did that animal live? And aren't those who came before us also gone? Some have been eaten up by the earth, some by fire, and some by water.

That wise man will show you these things and say, "What is the point of all this? Only your duty. Think about it. There is a judgment by God. There is a truth. You have a life to live, and you have wisdom. In your life there is good and bad. So realize with your wisdom that all lives are the same as yours. If you come to this state, you will recognize that all lives are as precious as yours.

"Come! Look around you. Whatever you see is a show. One creation devours another, one destroys the other, one burns and eats the other. Living corpses are eating dead corpses, and the dead corpses are being eaten by the earth. What is the use of all this? Think about it a little.

"Do not weep for the sake of earth. Do not weep for the sake of woman. Do not cry for the sake of gold. Do not weep on account of any of these. Do not desire them. Come here," the wise man will say, and he will demonstrate to you what earth, woman, and gold are really worth. "See! All these things you placed your faith in are impermanent. Do they exist forever? No, only for a short while.

"You bought a house earlier. Where is that house now? You painted it, repaired it, and maintained it. After two or three years it began to fall apart again. With your hands you toiled over it. But did it last forever? No, you do not have it now.

"You draw a monthly wage, maybe eight hundred dollars or one

thousand dollars. Is the money in your hand? No, it has gone to the bank, but does it stay there? Is the money in your pocket now? No, it has gone to supermarkets and stores. Did it stay there? No, it went to yet another market. Do you see?"

The wise man will say, "See how everything moves from one place to another? Earth changes, wealth changes, gold changes. Woman changes too. A man marries a woman for her beauty and loves her for awhile. She bears two or three children, nurses them, and takes care of them as they grow. Suddenly one day, he sees another woman, falls in love with her, and gives up his wife for this woman. Or sometimes the wife gives up her husband and goes off with another man. So the man may leave or the woman may leave, wealth may leave, houses may decay, land may be lost. What is left? Please reflect on this a little. What remains with you? Love and compassion. Love will dwell with you always. Goodness stays with you. God is ever with you. True compassion, love, and God are what we can keep with us always. Other than this what is there? Nothing. So what are you planning to do? What are you thinking of doing?

"This is our fate. We came to this world carrying nothing. Wealth and riches come to us, then go, after doing their duty. The land does its duty and later is eroded. Just as these things come and go, we too will be gone one day. None of these things belong to us. They are merely part of the show."

And the wise man will further tell us, "There is only one thing that belongs to you without the slightest doubt. As long as you are here, your duty is to love all lives as if they were your own life and do selfless duty to them. Treat the hunger of others as if it were your own hunger."

He will ask each of you, "How is duty to be done? Watch how water does its duty. Everyone needs water, do they not? Those who want to wash need water. Those who are thirsty need water. Those who go to the toilet need water to cleanse themselves. Cows and goats need water to drink or to bathe in. Everyone uses water. How does the water treat all of them? It does selfless duty, duty without discrimination. Water belongs to all. If someone is thirsty, it quenches his thirst. If someone is dirty, it helps to clean him. It brings comfort to all, performing selfless duty.

"We must do our duty in the same way. That is what selfless duty

is. When we reflect upon this and understand it with wisdom, we will understand how we can do selfless duty."

But my child! I digressed from the story I was telling you earlier. Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (رضي الله عنه) was once a very wealthy king. He slept on a gem-studded bed of gold. His house was decorated with an elegance beyond description. Yet he had within him a spark of true faith in God.

One day while he was lying on his bed, he heard the thud-thud of someone walking on the roof. He cried out, "Who is there?"

From the roof came the response, "O Ibrāhīm ibn Adham! I am searching for my lost camel!"

Ibrāhīm (رضي الله عنه) shouted back, "You crazy fool! How could you ever imagine that a camel could be on top of the roof?"

To this the man replied, "What you say is quite true. The roof is no place to search for a camel. A camel could not possibly be found here. However, you are searching for God while reclining on a gem-studded golden bed with soft silken mattresses and pillows. How can that be possible? How can you see God there?" Having said this, the man disappeared.

This got the king thinking. After a while he instructed his prime minister that from now on anyone in his kingdom was allowed to visit the palace. Before this edict, no one had ever been allowed to see the king, except under the strictest of conditions. They had to crawl on all fours and bring expensive presents. But from now on, the palace would be open to everyone in the kingdom. So everyone came. The rich people came bearing gifts of gold and silver, and others came merely to see the corridors of the king's palace. Along with the crowd came someone like me [Bawa Muhaiyaddeen], dressed in tattered clothes. The guards tried to stop him, thinking, "What place does a beggar have in the palace?" But when they approached him and saw the deep look in his eyes, they could not bear to face him or prevent him from entering. So he continued until he came face to face with the king, who asked him, "O man! What is it you want?"

The man replied, "I have come to this rest house."[2]

The king replied, "You call this a rest house? This is the king's

2. Rest house: A term used in Sri Lanka for a place similar to a motel, where travellers rent space for a short while.

palace. You must be crazy."

The man said again, "Oh! This is truly a rest house I have come to."

The king retorted, "This is Ibrāhīm ibn Adham's palace, not a rest house!"

Then the man said, "Is that so? Well then, who lived in it when this building was first built?" The king mentioned the name of a king from long ago. "And where is he now? Is he still living in this building?"

"No, he has gone. He is dead."

"Is that so? And who lived in it after that?" The king mentioned another name. "And after that?"

"Someone else."

"After that?"

"Someone else." And so on, until Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (رضه) gave his grandfather's name, and finally his father's name.

"Where are all of them now?"

"They have all gone and now I am living in it."

Then the man said, "Each one of them came and stayed for a while and left, did they not? So then, is it not a rest house? You are here now, but you too will leave. I also have come to this rest house to stay for a while! None of the others stayed did they? They came, they ate, and they left. They were all just travellers, passing by. Each one who came here left as soon as his business was over. So this must be a rest house. But you say it is not. You say this is your palace, but very soon your business will be over and you will leave too. You are only staying temporarily in this place, this rest house.

"Think about it, Ibrāhīm ibn Adham. If you have brains in your head, think well! This is truly no more than a rest house, a place for you to rest temporarily. But very soon you will have to move on." Having said this, the old man left.

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (رضه) thought very hard, but he was confused and could not think clearly. So he called his minister and told him to arrange for a hunt. It so happened that when the hunting party went into the forest, the king became separated from the others and was riding on alone. He saw a deer and went chasing after it, but just as he was about to shoot an arrow at it, the deer turned around and spoke to him, "O king! Stop! Stop! You are hunting me down,

yet you are unaware that someone is hunting you. You seek to hunt me and eat my flesh, but there is also someone hunting you, waiting to consume you. You seem to have forgotten that!" The sound of the deer's voice seemed to come from every direction. "Ibrāhīm ibn Adham! Think of that which is chasing after you! Think of what it is that is trying to kill you! See who is hunting you, intending to eat you."

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (ra) gave up the hunt and rode away. He rode and rode until he came upon a shepherd, a poor man in his kingdom. The king told him, "Take my clothes and my horse, and give me your clothes." Then, dressed in the poor man's clothes, Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (ra) began his travels and his search until he reached Khidr Nabī (as).[3] It was Khidr Nabī (as) who had appeared earlier, both as the man on the roof and as the man in tattered clothes who came to the palace. Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (ra) stayed with him for a while and learned wisdom from him. Later on he met Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah (ra)[4] and learned wisdom from her as well.

In a similar way, we must learn and progress in wisdom. As we do, we will cut away our selfishness, little by little.

Do not worry too much about it right now. Proceed little by little, step by step. Don't think you can do it all of a sudden. Gradually, as you correct your qualities one by one, as you correct your thoughts, as you discard your desires and attachments, and as you let go of your blood ties—as you go on correcting these things one by one, then that state of selfless duty will come. Then you will understand. Right now it is hard for me to explain it to you. Wait patiently. When wisdom develops in you, you will understand.

There were two sisters, one younger and the other older. Both were beautiful. They had lost their parents, so in order to provide for them both, the elder sister became a prostitute. Many men came to visit her. They would come and go, bringing nice presents.

One day the younger sister asked the older one, "Men are coming

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3. Khidr Nabī (as): The Eternal Prophet, the Prophet of life existing eternally as divine analytic wisdom, the sixth level of consciousness. For one of the many stories Bawa Muhaiyaddeen tells about Khidr Nabī (as), see *The Guidebook to the True Secret of the Heart,* Volume 2, "The Eternal Prophet."

4. See footnote, page 111.

to visit you day and night, all the time. What are they coming for? They come, you talk to them, and then they leave. What is happening?" Then the older sister replied, "My sister! It is hard to explain. Even if I try to tell you now, you will not understand, not at this time. Even if I explain things to you, you cannot understand what it means, or what joys or sorrows it involves. Be patient. After a while you will experience this yourself, and then you will know the answer. It is hard to explain these things to you now. Later on, when you realize, you will understand."

Time passed, and the older sister aged, while the younger one reached the age the older one had been. She now had to be the provider. And now men were visiting her just as they had visited the older sister earlier. One day the older one said, "A long time ago you wanted to know all about this. Now do you understand?"

She replied, "Yes, only now do I see the joys and sorrows and what it all means."

The older sister asked her, "If I had told you then, would you have understood? It is only because you have come of age that you can know what it means."

"Yes. Now I do understand. Now I can see the duty that is involved, as well as what results from such a duty."

Similarly, when you associate with a truly wise man, a good man, a *shaikh,* you will understand little by little. Before that, even if you are told, you will not understand. So learn, little by little. Over time, as you observe his qualities, his actions, and his state, you will come to understand little by little. Then it will be easy. Do you understand?

August 1, 1979 P.M.

Session 14

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Session 14

QUESTION: How can we control our desires?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If you have a desire to eat fish and go to a lake intending to catch some, you will see fish of all different colors swimming by and will like them all, thinking, "Ah! This one is good. Ah! That one is good too." Before this you had tasted only one kind of fish, but now, seeing so many varieties and colors, you find yourself desiring each one more than the other.

The lake is very deep. If you are drawn into it by the many colors, you may get stuck in the mud at the bottom. You may even drown. So it is not safe for you to jump in, drawn by the colors and glitters and your desire for them.

You have not yet gotten over the suffering you felt from eating just one fish—the stomach aches and all the other side effects. So if you go after many fish because of their pretty colors, isn't that going to bring you even more suffering? Think about the agony you felt earlier from one fish and how much more you will suffer if you jump into the lake to get more. You need to beat that desire with your wisdom. Give it a good whack and tell it, "Wait a bit. Be patient. Take time to get over the last situation. I need to get some clarity about what happened."

It takes only a worm or a minnow to lure a big fish, but once the big fish grabs the bait, it will be hooked and pulled in, dangling on the end of the line. The worm is our attachment, our desire, which illusion *(māyā)* casts into the water. If we grab the bait, we too will be hooked and our illusion will drag us in and leave us dangling on the line. We have to save ourselves from being caught by that hook of desire. We need to stay aware that the line is trying to drag us in, and resist our desire for the bait.

Therefore, tell yourself, "I was hooked once before, and the wound in my throat has not healed yet. If I go after this bait, my

throat will be torn again." Remember this and refuse to take the bait. Say, "This hook is out to catch me again. Wait a little until the old wounds heal. After that we shall see."

QUESTION: How can we control our hastiness and anger?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Hasty intellect and impetuous anger will destroy even the priceless love of God, that beautiful love with which He does good things for you. They will also destroy the love others have for you. This hasty intellect and uncontrollable anger must be given up. Give them up.

Man must have true faith. He must have the one thing called faith in God. No matter what race or religion you belong to or what scriptures you follow, if you should find a buried pot of gold when digging in the earth, take it! Or if you find some precious stones, take them! Don't think, "This belongs to some religion other than mine." Don't let that prevent you from taking it.

Similarly, if you find God's qualities, God's conduct, God's truth, or His wisdom, or His good words, take them, no matter where they may be. If you have wisdom, you will take them and progress. Do not let doubt, suspicion, or discrimination make you discard them, thinking, "This is from another religion. My religion is better!" That would be ignorant. Search for truth, and wherever you find it, take it and keep it with you in your treasury. It will give you immense benefit.

Your race and caste will not follow you into the grave. Your religious leaders will not go with you into the grave. Your lawyers will not go with you into the grave. All of them have to stop at the cemetery; they cannot go beyond that point. Religions and races are only interested in you until you are buried. Up to that time, they will go on squeezing the life-blood out of you. Even at the last minute, as you are about to be buried, they will demand, "Where is the money for the funeral?" They will only sing hymns for you if someone is prepared to pay for it. This is all false work. None of these people will go with you when you are lowered into the grave. The only thing that will go with you is the good and the bad you have done in this lifetime.

So if you find good words, words of truth, no matter where they come from, accept them as invaluable treasures and store them within your heart. That will be good. But if you find words that are bad or evil, avoid them. Every one of us needs to do this.

QUESTION: You have proved to us that the world is poisonous. But as we travel this path, with every step we take, it seems the road becomes longer and more treacherous. This is frustrating.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The world is not large, nor is it getting larger. If you take an atom and split it into a thousand particles, the world is not even as large as one of those particles. The world is very, very tiny. It is only when you have no wisdom that the world appears large. But once wisdom dawns in you and looks around, it will no longer notice this tiny world that occupies only an obscure amount of space. The world is such a tiny thing. It is barely visible or worthy of our attention. It only seems huge to us because we are blind in both eyes and are groping to try and find out what it is like. For example, we need to open our eyes if we want to find an object that we put down somewhere. Only if our eyes are open can we see to go directly to that spot and pick it up. Similarly, only if we open the eyes called wisdom will the world be small.

In order to develop wisdom, you first need faith. If you acquire good qualities and develop wisdom and if with that wisdom you join with someone who is good, then it will be very easy. Then you will see that the world is not so big after all.

An experienced and skilled mechanic can repair a car very easily. It is not difficult for him. He will recognize that the fault is only a small one and will repair it quickly and easily. But when an inexperienced person attempts to repair a car, the job can get very complicated. First he might take out the carburetor, then the plugs, then maybe the engine. Even though the problem may be small, he will dismantle so many parts that you cannot drive the car home. After taking out all those parts, he still may fail to discover the problem. If he would just try to find out why the current is not reaching the engine, he might detect a tiny fault and either clean that part and put it back or replace it with a new one. Then the

work would be done quickly and easily.

In the same way, once wisdom dawns, the repair job will become very easy.

QUESTION: I have been praying to God that the evil thoughts in my heart can be washed away. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. Can they be washed off once and for all by constant remembrance of God?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It is not possible to wash it away all at once. You have been applying this paint for seventeen years, from the age of three, so it cannot be removed in one try. The old paint has to be scraped away little by little, until it is all gone. Only then can a new coat be applied. If you apply the new paint too hastily, it will not stick. So, do not be in a hurry. Scrape it little by little.

August 5, 1979

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Session 15

QUESTION: Can Bawa give me some advice on how I should conduct my life?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Take care of yourself and your affairs correctly. Do something that will enable you to look after your family. That is how you should conduct your life. Not only you, but all the children must do that.

What we call our life is extremely subtle. It is so subtle that fifty years of a successful life could be ruined by a single incident, by one tiny 'point'. Therefore, at every moment of our life, we must surrender to God and exercise perfect concentration, perfect balance, and wisdom *(thānam, nīthānam, avathānam,* and *gnānam).*

What we call life cannot be looked upon as merely walking on this earth, for life exists in the open space, moving back and forth between two points—one in the East and the other in the West.[1] Between these two points all sorts of winds, gales, waves, agitations, fires, quakes, and atomic disturbances occur. Our life must rise above all of these. We should not be content with simply walking on the earth. The earth is merely the place of creation. Our true life is up there, in space, and the soul must move toward the West, toward God. So we need to conduct a life which connects these two points in the East and West. Rather than just walking here on earth, we must rise up to the sky, where there are many points more subtle than the atom. The path we must walk on there is so subtle that if you were to split a hair into seven parts and take just one of those fine strands—that is how subtle it is. We must walk on the fine point of wisdom.

1. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen has explained that the East represents creation, the earth, the place where one appears. And the West is the final state where the self dies within one's prayer and the soul merges with God.

It is in just such a subtle manner that we must conduct our life—walking from East to West. In that realm, there is no earth but there are tremors. There is no ocean but there are waves and whirlpools. There is no fire, but there is scorching heat. No water, but tempestuous storms. No air, but violent gales. No *māyā* (illusion) will be visible there, but the tremendous force of *māyā* is operating.

As we move along that fine strand, we need to maintain our balance, for on one side lies satan and hell, and on the other side lies illusion. We must maintain our focus on our objective at every second. If we turn to look off to one side, we will lose our balance and fall and be dragged down by hell. If we look in another direction, we will be dragged down by illusion. If we look behind, we will be shifted into reverse, and earth and birth will suck us in.

As we walk on the sharp edge of wisdom, our point of focus should be God and our soul. Maintaining that focus at all times, we must proceed, perfectly balanced. That is the correct point of our life. If we do not stick to that point, our life will break down and we will collapse. If we so much as glance backward, birth will drag us down, and if we look to one side, illusion will grab us. If we look to the other side, satan and hell are waiting to drag us down. In the midst of these forces, it is imperative that we walk poised and balanced.

This is what our life is. We need to know how to conduct this life. One who strikes the right balance and walks correctly on the path will attain victory. That is wisdom, or *gnānam.* The one who crosses over attains *gnānam*. This is what we all need. Do you understand? Life is not meant to be spent strolling along on earth, remaining in the place of birth. Instead, life should proceed from here and return to the place we were before. Life is merely the connection between that place from which we came and the place we are now. We must reflect on this. If we lose our balance at even one point along the way, we will fall.

Each one of us must understand this, what life is. To help us with this we need the wisdom of a *shaikh* who is an *insān kāmil.*

Please reflect on this. The entire meaning of life is contained within this one point. This point is all that matters.

What else, my children? Please ask.

NANCY SHABASON: I understand Bawa to say that you have to be responsible for yourself and your life, and that what you put out you will get back. But I also hear Bawa saying in his prayers to let God be responsible for His children.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Yes! It is in proportion to your striving that you will receive. Therefore you must go on doing your duty.

God has everything. Everything is kept in His treasury, so the wages for whatever you do, whatever you accrue by your actions, must go to that bank and be stored there. Then when you need something, you can draw it from there. That treasury is where everything is kept. And it is to that place that you hand over all your earnings for safekeeping and receive the wages for all your actions. That is God's bank. That bank is God.

So, do your duty and be of service. If you should commit any mistakes, you might be fined, but if you do things properly, you will get higher wages. Your salary may keep being raised year after year. That is God's treasury.

NANCY: How can you know whether you are doing things right or wrong?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It is for that purpose that you have to come here, to gain some wisdom. Come and learn a little wisdom. Then, when you place the goods on the scale to be weighed, you will know by observing which side the lever moves to, the right or the left. You yourself will recognize it. Even if you have no eyes, you can recognize the difference by feeling it. Whenever you realize the scales are evenly balanced, you will know that your actions are right. If you have that point of wisdom within you, you will easily see the balance of the scales.

When you are constructing a building, you use a carpenter's level to make certain the walls are level, do you not? When they are completely level, the air bubble in the carpenter's level will be perfectly centered. In the same way, look with wisdom at your life and make sure it is centered. If it is not, correct yourself until it is perfect. We must all do that, not only you—you, I, and everyone here.

NANCY: I'd like to go to school here in Philadelphia, rather than in Toronto. Is that okay?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: It's hard to control one's thoughts. Water runs from a river to a lake and is then collected in a reservoir. From the reservoir it is pumped into a storage tank, and from there it flows down through pipes. Even though a huge mass of water flows from lake to reservoir and from reservoir to storage tank, its flow is accurately controlled. And when the volume of water grows smaller as it flows down through pipes from the overhead tank, an efficient faucet easily controls the flow.

Similarly, if you use your wisdom, it should be easy to control your life. Control is very easy for wisdom, but not for mind and desire. Mind and desire are monkeys, and a monkey can only imitate what it sees. So you must catch the monkey, tie a chain around its waist, and fasten the chain to a tree. Then the monkey will be kept busy climbing up and down, up and down, concerning itself only with the tree, and you will be free to go on with your work.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: (looking out the window for the birds) Where is our little house sparrow? Has she flown away? Maybe she has gone in search of food.

I spent sixteen years in one room in Colombo (Sri Lanka) and about nine years in this room here in the States. Some rooms are really like prison cells and living in them can be quite difficult. Only today have you come and taken a look at this prison cell. I have not found my freedom yet. It is difficult living in one room.

QUESTION: Where is freedom?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Freedom! Whenever I break loose from the connection to the feeling of 'I' and the connection to all of you—that will be my day of freedom.

As long as we carry the weight of 'my country', the burden of a name, the burden of the mind and body and of desires and illusions *(māyā),* the burden of the stomach's hunger, and the burden of blood ties and attachments to race, religion, sects, and color—that weight will be very heavy.

O God, when will I obtain freedom from all these loads? When will I be free of all burdens? The day we are able to unload all these burdens is the day we will feel peace. Each one of us is carrying many

burdens and suffering because we are unable to unload them. May God protect us and free us of these loads.

Wilhelm, my brother, what do you want?

WILHELM POOLMAN: I was visiting Damascus and I was shown the tomb of Ibnul-'Arabī.[2] Could Bawa Muhaiyaddeen say something about Ibnul-'Arabī?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: When I don't know about myself yet, how can I speak about Ibnul-'Arabī (رضي الله عنه)? But there is a story I can tell you, a story about three words spoken by a tiny bird.

One day a hunter caught a tiny bird. He wanted to eat it, but because it was too lean, he locked it in a cage and started feeding it to fatten it up. Every day he would look hungrily at the bird, checking to see if it was fat enough yet.

Time passed, until finally he could no longer contain his desire and thought, "I will eat this bird today." But as he approached the cage, the bird suddenly surprised him by saying, "O great one! O wise one! Please reflect a little! I have three beautiful sayings of wisdom that can benefit you throughout your life."

Very surprised, the man said, "All right! Tell me what they are."

To this the bird replied, "There are some conditions you must meet if I am to tell you these priceless words of wisdom: While I tell you the first one I will remain in the cage. But for the second, I must be sitting in the palm of your hand. And when I tell you the third, I must be sitting on the branch of this tree. These are words of such great wisdom that if you accept them and abide by them, you will become a respected elder in your community, one of exalted wisdom, one who is elevated in life, with undiminishing wealth."

The man, excited and anxious, hastened to reply, "Really? In that case, please quickly tell me these wise words!"

So, from inside the cage the bird told him the first wise saying. "Do not cause suffering to yourself by worrying about what has already happened and regretting it. Dwelling on the past will only

2. Ibnul-'Arabī (رضي الله عنه) (1165-1240). Born in Spain, he later settled in Damascus. He is one of the greatest metaphysical Sufi teachers. His most monumental work is *The Meccan Revelations.*

bring on illness, distress, and suffering. Push the past behind you. Throw it away. This is my first wise saying for you."

"All right! Tell me the second wise saying."

The little bird reminded him that it had to sit on his hand to tell him the second saying. So the man opened the cage and the bird sat in the palm of his hand and said, "Do not believe the crazy things the world will tell you. Do not bring suffering upon yourself by believing what crazy people say. If you believe all the lies and crazy words spoken by others, you will face many difficulties and much suffering."

Then the bird flew up to the branch, and the man asked for the third wise saying. But the bird replied, "Ah, but before I give you that, I have something for you to think about. A moment ago I was in your cage, completely within your power, but you let me go free. That is your state of craziness and ignorance. You could have eaten me and satisfied your hunger. I would have been a juicy dish. And not only that, you failed to realize you had a priceless fortune in your hands, and you let it escape."

"What are you talking about?" demanded the man.

The bird replied, "I have within me a rare and priceless gem that weighs ten pounds. If you had killed me and eaten me, not only would you have had a nice meal, but you would also have found this gem, which is worth a fortune. It would have provided sufficient money not only for you, but also for generations to come. However, you set me free. So you lost both a good meal and a fortune."

The man began to beat his head and tear his hair. He shouted at the bird, "You have tricked me, O tiny bird! If I had known this earlier I would have eaten you and taken the gem and lived in comfort all my life! As small as you are, you have managed to deceive me!" In this way, he went on shrieking and wailing.

The bird watched all this commotion. "O man! Don't you see! You have already forgotten the words of wisdom I told you just minutes ago! The first saying was, 'Do not regret what is over and done. Do not beat your head or tear your hair, grieving over things you should have done.' You failed to follow the advice I gave you. You could have eaten me, but you missed that chance, and I have escaped. The time you had me in your power is gone. Yet you continue to taunt yourself over that thought. You ignored the first

words of wisdom I gave you.

"Secondly, I told you, 'Never believe the crazy things people tell you. All the things crazy people tell you will be absurd.' This too you forgot. Think for a moment. I weigh only four ounces. You should have known this, since you yourself held me in your hand every day. So how could there be a ten pound gem inside me? Isn't that absurd? How could I fly with such a weight inside me? I told you a completely crazy thing, yet you believed it and are making yourself suffer over it. Didn't I tell you not to believe all the crazy words you hear? This shows how foolish you are. Look at you, tearing your hair, wailing that your life is ruined, that you have thrown away a wonderful opportunity. All this agitation just because you chose to believe such absurd talk."

The man had to agree. "What you say is quite true. You must be a Sufi[3] bird. Now will you please teach me the third point of good wisdom?"

The bird replied, "You failed to follow the first two lessons I gave you. You had already forgotten them within a matter of minutes."

But the man persisted, saying, "Tell me anyway."

And the bird replied, "All right! Here is the third word of wisdom. 'We should never waste time with fools such as you, nor try to teach them wisdom. If we do, it could bring danger to our life and to truth.' Why? Because it will never penetrate. Therefore we should not even attempt to teach wisdom to people like you." Having said this, the bird flapped its wings and flew away. This is what the Sufi bird told the man.

Like that, all your research and reading and thinking about things that happened in the past is not a useful pursuit.

Secondly, to believe in the absurd things written in books and to spend your time considering them is not worthwhile.

Thirdly, to go about saying that there is wisdom to be found there, or wealth, or that God can be found there, or to feel that you missed your chance to acquire these things—if you do that, you are placing your faith in an absurdity. Do not try to look for wisdom or wealth there. You will never find it. But if wisdom comes into you,

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3. Sufi: A mystic who has seen God within himself with the eye of certainty. See Glossary

and if you rely on that wisdom, it will tell you, "What is past is past. What happened before is gone and should be forgotten. Only the present is here. Therefore, what you must search for now is wisdom. Now, in your lifetime, while you are alive, search for a *shaikh*, an *insān kāmil,*[4] and try to find the treasure called wisdom."

If you can attain that wisdom, if that wisdom manifests in you, you can gain so many benefits from it. On the other hand, if you go after false things, if you hope to attain that treasure from books, you will be wasting your time. Books deal with things of the past, a useless pursuit. The past is long since gone. Instead, right now in the present, try to know yourself. Strive to obtain the wisdom that can help you to know yourself. Using that wisdom, you will be able to see God within you as the wisdom within wisdom.

As the Sufi bird said to the hunter, "If you understand this, it will be good for you. However, if you don't understand, it is better for me to be silent than to try to teach wisdom to a fool." After telling him that, the bird flew away. God, truth, and wisdom flew away.

Instead of studying about the past from books, we need to realize that in each period of history Allah sends a *Qutb* (ra)[5] to give explanations of God's words to the people. These *qutbs,* appear in each age to explain God's story. They come in the form of true human beings *(insān kāmils)* who have disappeared within the *qutbs.* Through their help, we can receive the wisdom, the treasure, and the explanations we need in this day and age. The *qutbs* who appeared in earlier ages brought the wisdom and explanations appropriate to that age, and now they are gone. For each age, God sent the *qutbs,* prophets, and saints appropriate for that time. Thus, there is a *Qutb* for the present era through whom you can receive the live teachings, the wisdom and explanations you need. You can obtain the truth and the light from him. If you fail to do so and instead waste your time reading books and trying to learn from the past, or if you feel a sense of regret over missing something, then it will be just as the bird said.

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4. *insān kāmil* (A) Perfected, God-realized being. See Glossary.

5. *Qutb* (ra) (A) One who functions in the state of divine analytic wisdom, as the wisdom that works within, giving us necessary explanations. For a more complete explanation, see *Questions of Life—Answers of Wisdom*, Volume 1, pages 311-313. See Glossary.

Please, we must all reflect on this.

QUESTION: Bawangal has said that the *dhikr, Lā ilāha illallāhū,*[6] must go on all the time. Some of us are not sure whether or not one actually has to say the words of the *kalimah* all the time, or is it just as good to take on the divine qualities of patience, or to think about God, and that the literal saying of these words did not really have to be done, or was not meant to be done?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: This *dhikr* is not meant to be said merely with the tongue and mouth. It is to be said by the soul *(rūh).* As long as those words are going forth from your soul at all times, your mind will not roam about here and there, concerning itself with vain pursuits. If you can keep your focus on one point and maintain that focus steadfastly, then you will not hear any extraneous sounds, nor will you be aware of the people around you or hear the sounds they make. You will be completely entranced by what you are focused on. You will be aware of only that, nothing else. Your mind will not be distracted by the desires and cravings for the world, or by other wrong thoughts and intentions arising from your sinful *karma.*

If you can maintain your focus on that point at all times, every minute, every second, you will never commit any sins. At every second you will hand over all responsibility to God. At every second you will be dwelling with God. You will be in direct communion with Him every second, inwardly saying, *"Lā ilāha:* There is none other than You; *illallāhu:* You are God." At every second you will know the bliss of experiencing Him within your heart. As each breath moves in this way, as you keep on remembering Him every second, His light form will develop within you.

What is this state like? If you dip copper in acid, the copper gets eaten little by little. And if you leave it in the acid, it gets eroded more and more until finally it is completely consumed. The word of the *kalimah* is the acid of Allah's power. Thus, as we keep on reciting

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6. *dhikr* (A) The remembrance of God. It is a common name given to certain words in praise of God. Of the many *dhikrs,* the most exalted *dhikr* is to say, *"Lā ilāha illallāhu*—There is nothing other than You, O God. Only You are Allah." This prayer is also frequently referred to as the *kalimah,* the word. See Glossary.

these words, that acid will burn up all the impurities the mind contains. Every day, every second, as you keep on dipping your mind into the acid of the *kalimah,* your desire for land, wealth, and woman will be burnt up, just as lead, copper, brass, and other such metals are consumed by acid. As these get burnt, all that will remain is pure gold. Everything else will perish. Gold never perishes.

What is this gold? The perfectly pure light form that was you when you were in the invisible divine realm called *arwāh.* That which you were before, that gold which came with you, cannot be burnt up. Everything else will be consumed by this *kalimah.* To burn up everything else, to see only the gold after the rest has been destroyed, to see its purity, its beauty, its light, and its completeness—that is the point of this practice. Thus, at the end, what you will see is where you were in the beginning. You were with God in the beginning, and you will go back to Him again. You came from God, and that power within you will join Him once again. When you see that completion, it is God you will be seeing. That is the only thing that cannot be destroyed. All else is perishable.

This is the *dhikr,* the *kalimah.* If, using your wisdom, you can do this correctly with each breath, if you can do this with your intention, if you can use your seven levels of consciousness[7] to send this *kalimah* throughout your body and perceive it with all seven levels (feeling, awareness, intellect, judgment, subtle wisdom, divine analytic wisdom, and divine luminous wisdom), as you perceive it and are aware of it in its completeness within the light of the *Nūr,* as this *dhikr* moves along with your awareness—all seven levels of consciousness knowing its movement—if you can move it along with your focus entirely on God, then everything else will be burnt up. Only then can it be called *dhikr.* Only then is that name applicable. If those words are not said in that state, they will have no meaning.

For instance, when a dog falls into the water, it will swim to the shore. Even though it moves through the water for a while, does that mean the water removes the fleas from its body? No! Did the water clean away its dirt? No! The dirt and fleas will still be there, trapped in its hair. When the dog gets out of the water, it will still be dirty, and the fleas will begin to crawl on its body again.

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7. The seven levels of consciousness. See Appendix.

Similarly, if the *dhikr* is not recited in that state, if the breath moves without that state of absolute focus and concentration, whatever was within you before will still be there. Only if you bathe in a way that will get rid of the fleas and dirt will you come out clean—only then will it be a true *dhikr.* If instead you say the *dhikr* with your mind and desire, you will be doing it as the dog did—swimming through the water, coming ashore, shaking the water off, but not getting rid of the fleas or dirt. Mere contact with the water could not cleanse the dog, and the *dhikr* performed in this way will not cleanse you. It will do you no good.

To do the *dhikr* correctly, you must do it in such a way as to burn off the monkey mind and the dog of desire. You must wash and scrub yourself so you come out free of all dirt and impurities, free of all burdens, weighing much less than when you went in.

Using the seven kinds of wisdom, you must scrub and wash yourself clean of the dirt of *karma,* the dirt of arrogance and *māyā* gathered at birth, the dirt of the monkey mind and the dog of desire. Only then will it be true *dhikr.* That focus must be there. Otherwise, mere recitation of the *kalimah* is a profitless exercise. It will be like a fish which, despite having always been in the water, is still covered with slime and scales. The fish must be washed and scrubbed and scraped before it can be cooked and eaten.

Although you may be swimming in the water, although you may be reciting the *dhikr,* as long as you are only reciting it with your mind and desire, the dirt will continue to gather and cling to you. That is not the way to say the *dhikr.* You will be trying to go to God carrying all your dirt with you. That is not the way to do it. That way cannot benefit you. With wisdom you must scrape off the dirt and throw it away. If you then make yourself one-pointed and recite with that focus, the acid of the *dhikr* will burn away and destroy everything else and bring back the resplendent pure gold in you. That gold is the original light, God's light. You must recite it with knowing. This is the proper way to perform the *dhikr.*

At every second you must prostrate your *qalb,* your innermost heart, and surrender to Him. Each *dhikr* has to prostrate to God. That is true *dhikr.*

QUESTION: I would like Bawa to talk about the Bible and its truth. I have certain questions I would like to ask him. The question is about revelations and the return of Jesus (ع). Is it true that Jesus (ع) will return?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Do you have any thoughts about it yourself?

QUESTIONER: I don't believe it myself. I don't believe that the Bible is in its pure form, so I can't accept it. That is why I have come to ask Bawa.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Is it true or false? That is not what we need to think about. Even though God, through Gabriel (ع), sent revelations to Jesus (ع) four times, we have not conducted ourselves according to the words of Jesus (ع).

Once when Jesus (ع) was walking along a seashore, some people who had been possessed by demons came to him, crying and wailing and complaining that demons had gotten into them and were causing them illnesses. So Jesus (ع) drove out the demons, ordering them to go into the ocean. But some refused, saying they could not leave. They demanded live sacrifices, blood sacrifices. They also wanted alcohol, wine, beer, brandy, and even feces, filth, and foul smells. Only if they could have those things would they leave. Then Jesus (ع) looked around and saw a pack of pigs. He commanded the demons who wanted this filth to get into the pigs, and they did. Then Jesus (ع) said that the pig was discarded by God and that human beings should not eat its flesh. So is it good to eat that flesh? Within the pig you find satanic qualities, thoughts, ghosts, demons, filth, dirt, and stench. All these are in the pig. It is through the pig that satan again enters us. So can you eat it? The words of Jesus (ع) have not been fully accepted by the very people who say they follow him. When we eat the flesh of the pig, we put back into our body all those bad actions and qualities that Jesus (ع) drove away. If we do that, we have not accepted the words of Jesus (ع). Can those who have not accepted what he said be considered his followers?

On another occasion Jesus (ع) said that you should love your neighbor as yourself. Do we do that? Don't we discriminate between black and white? Whether it is regarding the church or society or

politics, don't we discriminate? Even in our prayers, don't we discriminate?

Jesus (ع) also said that if someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other. Are we acting like that? No, we do not do that either.

If we really think about these words that Jesus (ع) spoke, we surely have to ask ourselves, "Is there anyone who is a true follower of Jesus (ع)?"

Jesus (ع) said that we should worship that one God who is our Father and that there is no other God but He. He told us to trust in that one and only God who is our Father in heaven, the One who is in that eternal state forever. Jesus (ع) told us to follow only that One. He said there is no image for Him, no statues, no comparison or example, that He is One of purity and our only Father. Is there anyone who has truly embraced these words and placed their complete trust in Him? No. Some people keep statues and forms as likenesses of God, things which act as a veil between them and God. Some even revere statues of dogs and cats, making them into gods. That one God has no shape or form or anything, and yet people have turned to many forms, pictures, and statues to worship. That is how Pharaoh worshiped. Who, then, are truly followers of Jesus (ع)?

Jesus (ع) with absolute certainty asserted that there is only one God, the Eternal Father in heaven. He told us to open our hearts and listen to Him, to knock on our hearts and ask from Him, to open our hearts and surrender ourselves to Him. Is anybody really doing that?

Today's institutions require you to pay for many things, even if you do not have much money. You have to pay for being born, and you have to pay to be taken to the cemetery to be buried. Whatever you do, you have to pay. From our birth until our trip to the cemetery, there are those who suck our blood. Did Jesus (ع) say to collect money for these things? Did Jesus (ع) or the prophets ever ask for money for these things? They only performed their duty. But Pharaoh, who was the opposite of God and never believed in God, demanded money for burials. So, it appears that such activities would only be done by those who have no faith in God. Who really follows Jesus (ع)?

As for the Bible, I do not know. I know only these things that Jesus (ع) said. The Bible is a person's heart. The words of Jesus (ع)

are a person's wisdom and his *īmān* (his certitude, absolute faith, and determination). Anyone who opens his heart and looks within will be able to understand the history of the prophets, the history of man, and the history of God. This is, for each person, the Bible, the Qur'an, and the *Thiru Marai.*

Man has to open his heart and look within. There he will find eighteen thousand universes, the mystery of God, the secrets of God, and the power of God. Only if a man opens his heart and understands this, can he become a true man. Such a one will really believe in God and the prophets, accept God and His qualities, and then actually put those qualities into his actions. This is what I believe in, not the way things are being done in the world today.

I am not saying the Bible or this or that is wrong. I can only say that those who conduct themselves according to the words of the prophets are true followers, while those who do not follow those words are not true followers of the prophets or of God. That is all I know to say.

Do you understand, my brother?

QUESTIONER: Yes.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: I do not know anything about religions. I have not read any books. I am not learned. I do not know anything. I only know God. Faith in Him is all that I have. Strengthen your *īmān* and intend God.

Just as we use water to revive a fading plant or tree, whenever we have any illness or distress, we must, with absolute faith, certitude, and determination, give all responsibility to God. That will be good. That is our duty.

SONIA GILBERT: In last night's discourse Bawa said, "If you have a thought, that thought was born out of your own quality. It is a result of your own quality." Is there a difference in the thoughts of a human being who is forever intending God and one who does not? Does the thought itself change? And the quality of the circumstance...when you see a circumstance and use your discriminating and evaluative power, you will come up with an answer that is not necessarily nice or good, if you evaluate it and this is what it is. Is that also born of your own qualities?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: In answer to your first question, at the time Adam (ع) was created, he was made in a state of perfect purity, without a single flaw or blemish. He was created as the light of God. But satan, who then was known as Abū, became jealous. At that time, he existed in heaven as commander of the jinns.

Earlier, God had told the angels and heavenly beings, "I am going to create Adam as the most exalted of all My creations. I will place My mystery and My secret within him. He will know things that even the heavenly beings will not know. Such is the power I will endow him with. Therefore all of you must stand behind Adam when you worship Me." All the heavenly beings and angels agreed to this, except Abū.

Now, in the beginning God made all the lights in creation and placed His resplendent light (the *Nūr)* in the midst of them. This light was so powerful that it overshadowed and obscured all the other lights. Then God asked them, "Which of you will agree to accept this light, keep it carefully, and return it to Me later?" All the lights jointly said, "O our God! This light You have shown us is so powerful that it has absorbed our lights, so we are in no position to accept such a trust."

Next God asked the same thing of the land, the oceans, the mountains, and the trees, in turn, and they replied, "O God, we are unable to withstand this light. If we accept it we will be broken apart and burnt to ashes." The oceans, mountains, trees, and shrubs all gave this reply to God, but earth rose up and said, "O my God! I am prepared to accept this light."

At that point God told earth, "O earth! You have invited your own ruin. You yourself have brought difficulties upon yourself. This light is a pure light, a light with no impurity, a light that will never die. It is My treasure. It has limitless, undiminishing power. If you accept this treasure, you must agree to return it to Me in its original pure form. It must not settle on earth or be contaminated by it. Fire must not touch it. Water must not touch it. Air must not beat upon it. *Māyā* (illusion) must not make contact with it. Nothing that I have created should ever have the chance to feel it or touch it. It must not be defiled in any way. When you give it back to Me, it must be exactly as it was when I gave it to you. Only then will you reap the benefit.

"If you return it to Me in a contaminated state, or if the power of this light is diminished in its glory, or if you fail to return it to Me, your punishment will be the suffering you bring upon yourself."

After this, Adam (ع) was created out of earth, and that light was impressed on his forehead. But satan, who was overcome by jealousy, said, "I refuse to accept Adam as greater than I," and spat his evil thoughts upon the body of Adam (ع). The moment the spit fell on Adam (ع), the purity of the earth was spoiled. Even though the spit was pinched out (by Angel Gabriel (ع)), the evil energy and thoughts of satan spread quickly throughout Adam's body—into the muscles and skin, into earth, air, water, fire, nerves, and marrow. Satan's poison rapidly spread into all of these. Whatever thoughts satan had—pride, envy, deceit, treachery—were dispersed throughout Adam's body, and they are what became our thoughts. These thoughts have come into us and spoiled our state.

But God had said that these influences must not touch that light within. Earth, fire, water, air, and ether, *māyā,* satan's jealousy, deceit, and treachery must not be allowed to contaminate that light. Earth was told that if even one of these were allowed to make contact with that light, then all would be lost. That is why this state prevails—these thoughts are the cause of our suffering. God does not punish us. It is we who are bringing about our own punishment. That is the meaning of "O earth! You have invited these difficulties to come upon yourself. You have sought your own ruin."

The divisiveness in the earth, the gold, the silver, the copper, and as many different colors as were in the earth—all of them became deposited in the body of Adam (ع). The essence, or thoughts, of satan settled within each of these, and they all became the property of satan. And God, calling them satan's property, pushed them away as belonging to hell. Because they were pushed away into the hell which is the world—only two thoughts remain for a human being. *Lā ilāha:* there is nothing other than You; *illallāh:* You alone are God. Everything is contained in these words.

God says, "Think of Me with every breath. Praise Me with every word, saying, *'Al-hamdu lillāh* (All praise belongs to God)!' Whatever happens to you at the present moment, hand over to Me, saying, *'Al-hamdu lillāh,'* and accept it with contentment *(shakūr).* Contentment is your only treasure, your only wealth. Everything else must

be handed over to Me. For whatever is going to happen at the next moment, say, *'Tawakkul-'alallāh* (O God! This is Your responsibility).' Only in this way can you protect the light, the treasure I have put in your charge."

Because God has decreed this, it is not really possible for us to do things on our own. For what happens this second, we need to praise God. And for what is going to happen in the next second, we must place our trust in Him. And for whatever we may receive, whether it be a lot or very little, we must be contented and satisfied. This is the wealth of man's life. If we can be in this state, we will realize that there is no work for us to do here, only our duty, which is to trust Him and praise Him. Your wages for this will be the contentment with whatever may happen. Then the responsibility for the results will not be our concern. Judgment is in His hands.

Secondly, God says, "I alone will know the *qalb,* the innermost heart. I am the One who understands everything. I have buried the eighteen thousand universes inside the heart of man and the mystery is within Me. Your life and death are in My charge. Your judgment is in My charge. I am the One who accepts your prayers. I am the One who knows your every thought and intention. I alone am able to realize your intention during your prayers, the reasons for those prayers, and the benefits you will receive. I alone know all that, no one else.

"Accepting your prayers is My duty. Dispensing judgment is My duty. No one else can do that. So do not try to judge others or pass judgment on them. That is not your job. You cannot know the intention in another's innermost heart, whether it be good or bad. And you cannot know whether he is praying or not. I alone know that. Just do your duty, giving all responsibility to Me. Do your duty in the way I do."

You can never understand the heart of another person. That is a great mystery. You cannot judge, saying, "This person worships, but that person doesn't worship." Only God knows such things. There are those in the mosque who may shout, "Allah!" Others might say, *"Allāhu Akbar* (God is great)!" Some might wear robes and worship in public places so they can be seen. Others may carry the Bible or the Qur'an with them and recite out loud in public. There are still others who might take a pot of water, an umbrella, and their bedding

and go to some secluded place to worship God. Some may take their purse and their money, pack up some food, and then go out in public to pray to God. All of them are carrying some kind of burden, some added thing for support—their religion, or their race, or their Bible or Qur'an.

One person may sit under a tree, crying. Another may sit under the same tree and smile, watching all the things that are happening around the world. Someone else might sit under a tree or in a cave or may stand on his head with his legs in the air and meditate in that way. Another might be lying down, asleep. Another may worship God on his knees. And there are those who are silent, in the state of death.

All of them are performing worship in their own way. They are all worshiping in some way or another. So who can know what each one's state is? Who can know the secret of what they are worshiping? A crazy man, a *gnāni,* and a religious leader all look the same. Can we pass judgment on them?

Only the one who dies in God is truly worshiping Him in His mosque. It is only God who will know. Only God will know who is thinking of Him, who keeps asking for Him, and whose intentions are toward Him.

God alone gives the judgment. We cannot pass judgment on anyone or anything. What we see going on is merely a show or a scene. By simply looking at that outer show, we cannot pass judgment. We cannot say, "I am worshiping and he is not. I am always thinking of God and he is not." We cannot make judgments like that. We must not even think like that. The only thoughts we should have are *tawakkul-'alallāh* (trusting God) and *al-hamdu lillāh* (praising God alone). Only Allah knows one's state and one's life. We need not bother ourselves about such things. We cannot know the reason for someone's actions, nor can we judge them.

Rasūl means a wise one. One who has wisdom is a *rasūl.* Such a one has only two words. For what is happening at present, whether good or bad, he will say *"Al-hamdu lillāh* (All praise belongs to God)" and *"Shakūr* (I am content)." He must always be praising God, because there is no assurance that he will be alive the next second. And for what is yet to happen, he must say, *"Tawakkul-'alallāh* (I don't know what the next second will bring. I do not know whether I will

be alive or dead. That is up to God)," or *"In shā' Allāh* (If God wills)," or *"Mā shā' Allāh* (God has willed it thus)."

Therefore, *insān* can say only these two words. This is the way a wise person will act. His duty is to protect the treasure God has given him.

If we are not in this kind of state, dirt may settle on that pure treasure and contaminate it. Earth, air, water, fire, desire, and illusion may cover it up.

We must keep that treasure pure, for we have to return it to God in a pure state. That treasure is the *Nūr* (the resplendence of Allah), which was impressed on the forehead of Adam (ﷺ) and all of God's children. If we understand this, then there is nothing else to ask for.

My child, it is not I who am talking. God is the One who is giving you the reply. I do not speak of my own accord. It is He who must speak. I have not studied, so I myself cannot give you a reply. He has to come and speak and give you the reply. So say, *"Mā shā' Allāh, in shā' Allāh,* and *al-hamdu lillāh."*

Anbu. My love.

August 6, 1979

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Session 16

SONIA GILBERT: How do you deal with the snake-like qualities in others?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: As long as there is a God, if you believe in God, then He will somehow prevent anything bad from happening to you. He knows and He will prevent it. Do not allow God to leave your innermost heart, your *qalb.* If you do not let go of your hold on God, He will never let go of you. Then a snake will never bite you. Even though it may set out to sting you, it will be made to forget what it came for and go away.

Let me tell you a secret. After you began coming here, mountainous changes occurred in your life. Many potentially difficult and even dangerous situations were averted and now they no longer can occur. A mountain of difficulties has been reduced to the size of a piece of straw. How can a straw hurt you? It cannot, because all the difficulties have been dissipated. It cannot happen.

However, you need to be aware that even after you remove the fangs of a snake, it will still hiss. Its qualities will still be there. Even if you show it love, it will hiss. Even if you offer it milk, at first it will hiss, but after a while it will suck the milk. Although its fangs have been removed, its qualities have not. Those qualities are still going to be there. The most venomous teeth have been removed, but there may still be a small amount of venom in the other teeth.

Therefore, if you offer milk to a snake, do it carefully and then put it back in the cage again. Do this with patience and wisdom. You must touch and yet not be touched, for if you offer your hand, it will sting you. However, because it has been defanged, even if it does sting, the poison will be very mild.

You must carry on with patience and wisdom and not make a big thing of this or be worried. It has been reduced to a small issue now. No matter what the circumstance, you must practice patience. Patience must always be with you.

Why? However good someone may be, if he sleeps on a pillow infested with head lice or bedbugs, they will bite him and keep him from falling asleep. That might bring out his anger, making him toss and turn and complain, "Oh, what a nuisance!"

If he crushes and kills one bedbug, a thousand more will emerge from its eggs and keep biting him. This is how it is. A bedbug will never let a man sleep; it will cause him problems and make him angry. The situation may even reach a point where the man says, "I don't want this bed any more. Throw it out."

So, if a man has a bedbug on his pillow, even if he is a good man, his anger and jealousy and other bad qualities will come out. All this because of a bedbug. It will go on biting and he will go on itching and losing sleep. The fault is not in the bed itself, but in the pillow and mattress where the bug breeds.

You need patience. Everything is a lesson you must learn from. Never look upon anything as a difficulty or a disaster, for if you look at it with wisdom, you will accept it and say, "God is teaching me something."

Let me tell you a story: There was a wise man, a great Sufi *gnāni* who had attained an exalted state. But one day the thought came to him, "Whatever may happen to anyone, I will protect them. I will help them."

Now for many years satan had tried to trip him up but never succeeded. However, the day this thought entered the *gnāni's* mind, satan saw his opportunity and rejoiced, "Oh ho! Now I can finally get this man." So satan clapped his hands and called for his companions.

All the satans gathered in readiness. "Why did you call us? What do you want us to do?"

"This is our chance to catch one of our enemies, a Sufi *gnāni* named Ahamad. I want you to change into a snake with fangs containing a very potent poison made from all eight kinds of evil poisons from the eight directions. With this poison in your fangs you must go to the Sufi *gnāni* and say, 'O Ahamad Kabīr, I am in danger. Protect me, take care of me.'

"He will tell you, 'I will take care of you. I will protect you.'

"Then say to him, 'Oh! My enemy is coming right now with a knife to kill me. Save me!'

"And he will answer, 'I will save you.' You must make him swear that he will save you. Make him say, 'Yes, I swear I will protect you.'

"Then pretend to be desperate and cry, 'Oh! Oh! My enemy is after me now! Please save me from him.'

"He will say, 'Coil around my head and I will cover you with my turban.'

"But you must insist, 'No, he will still be able to see me there!'

"Then he might tell you, 'Creep into my robe until your enemy goes away.'

"But you must persist and say, 'He will detect me there too. He will find me!'

"Then he will say, 'Coil around my waist and I will tie my sarong over you.'

"But keep saying, 'He will still detect me!'

"Finally, he will ask you, 'What shall I do with you?'

"Then tell him, 'Open your mouth and I will slide down your throat and stay in your stomach. If you tell me when my enemy has gone, immediately I will come out of your mouth.'

"He will ask you, 'How can I be sure you will do this?'

"Then you have to swear every oath you can. Swear seventy thousand times that nothing will happen to him and that you promise you will come out. Go on repeating this and begging him, 'You promised to save me. Please hurry, my enemy is coming!'"

Now, everything happened as satan had predicted. In the end, the Sufi opened his mouth and let the snake glide into his stomach. When the snake got inside, it started twisting and turning.

Then satan appeared in the form of an Arab with a sword in his hand. Satan intended to ruin the Sufi by turning him away from the good path. So, knowing that the Sufi could never tell a lie or he would lose his wisdom, the Arab asked, "Was there a snake crawling this way?"

The Sufi said, "It went this way and that way," pointing his hand toward himself.

"Which way?" the Arab cleverly insisted.

"It went through here. It came from there and went in this way," the Sufi said, pointing in the direction of his mouth.

"He went this way?" the Arab asked, pretending to think the Sufi was pointing behind him, not at his mouth. "He is my enemy; I

must finish him off," he said and then ran in pursuit.

By now the snake was wriggling in the Sufi's stomach. The pain was unbearable, so he said, "Your enemy has gone now. You can come out now. My stomach is hurting. Please come out right away."

Then satan said, "You are a fool. I am in a safe place where no enemy can get to me. Now I am going to spit these eight powerful poisons from my mouth into your heart. They will prick you like needle points and fill your heart with holes. You were talking as if you were God, but now I am going to burn you up with this most potent poison."

The Sufi said, "But you swore seventy thousand oaths on God that you would come out of me."

"What a fool you are. We have been waiting for you for ages. You have taken people away from us and sent them toward God. For eighty years we have been waiting to get you. Only now do we finally have the chance. If we can just finish you off, our kingdom of hell will flourish."

"What about all those oaths you swore?"

Again the snake said, "You really are a fool. Wasn't it a snake like me that caused Adam to commit the sin that banished him from the garden of Eden? Now I have come once again to lead you from heaven to hell. Didn't God say at that time, 'The snake will be an eternal enemy to the children of Adam?' You fool. There is no oath that can bind us. There is no good in us and no truth in us. We can swear hundreds of millions of oaths, as many as we want. You are a fool if you believe our oaths. Our work is to achieve our goal, and for this we will do anything or swear anything. God has told you, 'Don't believe them.' Did you ever reflect on what God said? No. That shows what a fool you are. Now we are going to finish you off and take you to hell, just as we did to Adam."

Then the Sufi said, "You are satan, and what you say is true. Just grant me one favor. Please allow me five minutes before spitting your poison into me. Spare me five minutes until I get to my own place, my own abode, and lie down. Once I get there, you can do whatever you want."

The snake said, "All right, I will grant you that one request. You have five minutes leeway."

The Sufi returned home, writhing in pain. Just as the snake was

about to spit its venom into him, he prayed to God with tears in his eyes and uplifted hands. "O God, I took on the responsibility of protecting people, a duty which belongs only to You. You alone are the Protector. Because of the words I uttered, I gave this satan, who had waited eighty years for me, the opportunity to catch me. O God, please forgive me and protect me."

Then the sound of Allah came. He forgave the Sufi and said to His angel, "O Gabriel, there is a certain herb in heaven. Pick it and crush it, then go quickly and put it into the mouth of the Sufi."

Gabriel (ع) went to the *gnāni* and said, "O wise one, open your mouth." He gave him the herb and the *gnāni* swallowed it. The herb killed the snake and it was excreted piece by piece.

Gabriel (ع) then said, "Go bathe and come back." When he returned, Gabriel (ع) explained, "You are a Sufi. Why did you let this quality come into you? Instead of saying, 'Allah will protect you,' you began to say, 'I will protect you.' That is why you had to undergo this tremendous difficulty. You should have said, *'Rahmān,* the Merciful One, will protect you. Allah will protect you.' You know that God is the only Helper and Protector. Allah is the One who protects everyone. But you said, 'I will protect you.' Because of these words you fell into this plight. O Sufi, go and offer prayers of praise *(tasbīh)* to Allah for another twelve years."

The *gnāni* went back and prayed for twelve more years.

Just uttering one little word, "I will help you, I am the one who will protect you," brought about the entire calamity.

However learned a person may be, if he makes a slip in even one word or one thought, the path opens, giving satan an opportunity to enter. So, for whatever is yet to happen, we must hand over the responsibility for it to Allah, saying, "God will protect me, God will take care of me." Whatever the circumstances, we must have patience, inner patience *(sabūr),* and contentment *(shakūr),* and then give all responsibility to God *(tawakkul).* If we can hand that trust over to God, He will take care of us.

In every word we utter, we should not give even one atom of space for satan to creep in. We must block off every opening through which he might enter. If we have falsehood, envy, jealousy, or anger, satan can enter us. He will set us up to make one or another of these qualities rise in us, and then he will try to enter by way of that quality.

Never give him that opportunity by harboring such thoughts. That is what we have to learn here.

The true state of prayer is to always remember the name of God, without giving room for satan to enter. Nothing else can be called 'praying to God'. If you can remain in that state at every moment, if you can concentrate on God with every breath, then there will be no room for satan to come in. That is what prayer is.

QUESTION: Sometimes I am confused about what God wants, whether He wants me to act to make things happen or whether He wants me to just be quiet and accept what happens.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: All right, let's look at it. Now, take a doctor. After medical school, if he becomes a surgeon, he will have access to all the surgical instruments needed to lay his hands on a life. What is his duty at that time? He knows that patient could live or die during the operation. So he may be thinking, "If the operation fails and the patient dies, I will be guilty of murder and go to hell. But if the patient lives, I will be praised." That might be so. But he should not think that he is responsible for the outcome.

There is a Creator who made this body, with all its nerves and blood vessels. Everything belongs to Him, even birth and death. Even all the praise and all the blame belong to Him. The doctor needs to realize that. He must reflect on that and say, "O my God, this is Your work. Please come and do Your duty, O God. I am only Your assistant. I am just an instrument in Your hands. It is You who must perform the operation, protect the patient, and save his life or make him die. This is Your duty. I am merely an instrument. The instrument is not responsible for the outcome. The Doer and Protector is You. Therefore You, Yourself, must perform this operation."

My child, you must realize that you are just His instrument, and the responsibility is not yours. Remember that God is the surgeon and you are His hands. If you perform your work in that state, there will be no danger. God will do it. If, however, you say, "I am performing this operation," then the praise or blame will be yours.

If you can understand that the responsibility for praise and blame is due only to Allah, and if you hand over everything to Him, then

you will perform all duties as His instrument, saying, "May the Doer be You, O God." Therefore, be the instrument and do whatever you do to the best of your ability. That is the way.

ANNE HOCHBERG: If a person reaches that state of realizing God, if his only thought is of God, then has his body also been transformed?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Each one of the thoughts of the mind can take a form. If you have any thought, such as killing someone, that thought takes the form of a lion. If you become jealous of someone and want to hurt that person, that thought takes the form of a snake. If you have the arrogance of envy, it takes the form of a vampire. If you have the arrogance of fanaticism or bigotry, it takes the form of an elephant in heat. Like this, each thought in our mind takes a form of its own, each with its own properties. These thoughts turn into four hundred trillion, ten thousand 'spiritual' forms which turn into elemental miracles *(sitthis),* each one claiming, "I can do it!" Each one becomes a miracle, but all it does is hurt, destroy, torture, or cause distress to somebody.

This is the way the mind acts. It can circle the whole world in a second. The speed of the mind is extremely fast, even faster than the wind. Now, a wind that blows at one hundred and fifty or two hundred miles an hour will destroy everything in its path: flowers, trees, roofs, tall buildings—everything. But there is another wind that devastates every area of one's life. It is the wind of anger, and it comes with the lightning speed of the mind. With great speed it destroys the truth and makes us get into fights. Have you not seen bottles and tables being broken as a result of anger? What is it that causes this? Anger. It can destroy all the good things you have gathered and saved so far. It can even destroy your precious life. It can crush everything you have searched for and striven for. Have you not seen this? This mind is capable of destroying your entire life. All that you have gleaned in a lifetime can be blasted away in one second.

The qualities of the mind are constantly changing form. As one disappears, another appears. When arrogance leaves, envy or jealousy hasten to take its place. The mind is constantly thinking up what it

can do to us next. It will use all the trickery it knows to taunt us with its evil qualities, threatening, "Someday I'll see an end to you." Then that thought goes away and some kind of scheming comes, "How can I finish off this guy?"

These qualities come one by one to destroy our life. When our intentions take these forms, they destroy the happiness of our life, the exaltedness of our life, the good in our life, the prayer, the faith, and the certitude in our life. Everything can be destroyed in a mere second. The speed of the mind is so great that it can go round the world in a second. We must control the thoughts of this mind that has such speed and force.

Therefore, we should stop giving form in our mind to things that are the opposite of God. If we stop creating such forms within, they will stop taking form on the outside. We must destroy the forms these thoughts take. If we can do that, we will no longer have any form of satan in us, and hell will be far from us.

This is why we say, *"Tawakkul-'alallāh* (This is Your will)." For whatever is yet to happen, we give all the responsibility to God. For what is happening right at this moment, we say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh.* This is Your work." Then we say, *"Shakūr* (I am content with whatever is given to me)." As we go on doing this, these forms will gradually be destroyed and all our entanglements and problems will come unraveled. All the things that destroy our life will fizzle out. They are only the work of the mind.

SONIA GILBERT: Once I asked Bawa about a picture of *gnānam* riding a peacock. I asked, "Why does the peacock still feel pain?" And he said, "Oh it will. It will even cry, because even though wisdom is riding on it, its body can still feel the effects of the elements."

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The five elements dance. The peacock represents the five elements: earth, fire, water, air, and ether, which form the five colors of the peacock. These five colors are dancing in the world, a wondrous dance that holds the world fascinated and entranced.

However, although the peacock's body is sleek and full and beautiful as it dances with outspread tail, yet when it looks down

and sees its short, black, skinny legs, it hangs its head in shame and sorrow and thinks, "Even though my body is so beautiful, my legs are short, black, and ugly."

In the same way, no matter how beautiful the five elements are or how beautiful the body may be, if man examines his state with wisdom, he will think, "Oh, this mind and desire of mine—how disgusting they are! They do not match my beauty. My conduct is not right, and my qualities are not good. They do not match my beauty." So man's wisdom grieves over his state, just as the peacock grieves over its ugly legs.

Man must ponder, "How can I change this situation? How can I change my qualities and actions so I need not be ashamed?"

QUESTION: Bawa said that what we learn in the cradle is like etching on stone, and we take it to the grave with us. I wanted to know if all that etching could ever be erased by being with Bawa, or will we always be stuck with some of this?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: There are two proverbs: "What is learned in childhood is etched on stone," and "Habits learned in the cradle go with you to the cemetery."

Why is this? When you are young, the tape is brand new and the recording is being made for the first time, so whatever you learn is imprinted and embedded deeply. It is as if carved on rock, and only by cracking the rock can you undo what you learned then. But what you learn when you are old is like words written on water. It can be easily erased and forgotten. Troubles, sorrows, and the various difficulties of your life come and distract you and you forget.

Therefore, when the child is young, if all the good qualities, good learning, and good teaching can be ingrained within him, they will be there forever. It will never be forgotten. This is my experience. I never went to school. But the habits I was taught at a very young age have remained with me. Now I am old, and when I try to learn Arabic, Tamil, Telugu, or English, the learning only lasts a moment and then gets washed right off. Nothing sticks in my brain. It is like writing on water. However hard I try, the only things I can remember are those that have been there within me from the beginning.

QUESTIONER: We learned a lot of bad things from our parents because they were not trying to learn wisdom. Can those things be erased or are we going to always be stuck with some of them?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Up until one is about thirty or forty, there is room to erase those qualities. We must try to erase them within that time. After that, it will be difficult to change, for there will always be conflicts when we try.

It is not like that for you. In your case there is that seed of good qualities your parents planted in you when you were young. Prior to World War II, children had good untainted seeds planted within them. But children born in the past thirty years, after World War II, have had a lot of bad habits implanted in them. Even the parents have changed their qualities. Bad habits abound, and the children have copied them and come to a terrible state.

You children born before then have that untainted seed. You show good qualities, good actions, good thoughts, and good habits.

There was famine and a depression in the United States about forty or forty-five years ago (1930s). The rich became poor and experienced many hardships. There were many suicides. A similar situation is drawing near again. Considering the way things are going, this could happen.

Faith in God is absent. Certitude is absent. Trust in God is absent. At an earlier time, there was the thought of God, talk about God, and the intention for God. Do they speak about that now? There is no mention of God in the news, or in books, or on television or radio. What you hear now is like the cawing of crows or barking of dogs. In the last thirty years, people have begun to wear the masks of dogs, cats, elephants, rats, bears, snakes, demons, vultures, and dragons. It is these actors' masks that people wear now, and their actions match the masks. Everything that pertains to God is being eliminated and replaced with animals and actors. So that is what children are learning about nowadays. They are happier wearing animal masks than human faces. As long as this trend persists, the children who are born will have animal qualities.

Let me tell you a story. There was a black African Arab who was a famous champion boxer, and many people had his photograph in their houses. Now, a white couple with good qualities were living a happy and peaceful life together, and like many people, they too had

the boxer's picture in their home. It was on the bedroom wall.

Now, the wife felt some affection in her mind for that boxer, so when the husband and wife were making love, her eyes would be focused on the picture of that black boxer rather than on her husband. She admired his strength, his body, and his vigor. Her husband would be thinking about other things, but her concentration was on that picture.

Later, when the child was born, it was black, just like the boxer. The husband was upset and disclaimed the child, saying, "This is not my child. She has conceived it by another man."

She denied it, swearing, "No, I never had anything to do with anybody else."

But he said, "The child is proof of it." It came to the point where there was almost a divorce.

The case went to the courts and she lost, but she appealed. When the judge looked at her, he was struck by her modesty and good conduct. Then he looked at the man and saw that he too had good qualities. The judge wasn't an impatient man who made rash decisions, so he thought, "There must be some other reason for this phenomenon." After thinking for a while, he asked, "In your bedroom, do you have any pictures?"

They said, "We have a picture of Jesus and Mary and St. Joseph hanging over our bed." The judge asked, "Just opposite your bed, do you have any other pictures?"

She said, "Yes, there is a picture there."

He said, "Bring it to me."

They brought the picture that faced the bed, the picture of the black boxer. The baby was also in the courtroom, and the judge saw that it looked very much like the man in the picture. So the judge vacated the court and spoke to the couple in private. He said to the husband, "At the time the two of you were making love, your wife's eyes were focused on this picture, and when conception occurred, that imprint went onto the child. That is the cause of the child's color. Because she had in her mind a kind of fondness and respect for this man's strength, body, and vigor, they got imprinted onto the child."

Then the woman admitted, "I really did admire his strength and his body."

The judge told the husband, "Because your wife was concentrating on that boxer at the moment when conception occurred, the baby looks like him." He dismissed the case and said to the couple, "Now go back and be happy. This is your child."

Remember this. In your bedroom, you should have something good, something like your husband's picture. If something else is there, that is what will be imprinted on the fetus.

That is why the custom in the East is for the woman to wash and cleanse herself and then, before joining with her husband, to look at either his face or a light, so the child conceived may be born with the radiance of that light. The mind is like a camera, a very tricky camera. Whatever the mind focuses on gets imprinted and then takes a form. This is the nature of the mind.

SONIA GILBERT: When I was growing up I used to hear people say, "Look, here is a picture of my grandchild. He is very beautiful...."

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: We need to think. There should be a lot of love and feeling between the husband and wife when the imprint of the child is made. If so, the child will be born with that beauty and those qualities. But in the absence of such a state, some children could be born lame or deformed or ugly. The parents are the people who write the book. The printer merely typesets it and prints it. It is not the fault of the typesetter or the printer if there is any mistake in the book, any error in the text. It is the fault of the writer.

In the same way, we give a script to God, and He prints out just what we wrote. But then, when we find mistakes, instead of checking back and proofreading what we ourselves wrote earlier, we find fault with God. We blame Him for any mistakes, but it is we who wrote out the script for the child's life. If we had written a good story with good points, that is the story He would print, and the result would be a good and beautiful child.

QUESTION: Do I need a mantra?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You do not need a mantra in order to

form a connection with God. If the heart is clear, there is no need for mantras. If the bond between God and us is established, then we need no mantras at all. And there is no point in going on reciting them. If the heart is willing, there will be room enough for God.

August 10, 1979

Session 17

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Session 17

ABDUL BASEER BIVINS: In a meeting in Bawa's room, Bawa had Razinah read something from *The Ten Mystical Experiences*[1] pertaining to the four faces of the Angel of Death and some other things. Can Bawa speak more on that?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: When I saw 'Izrā'īl (ﷺ), the Angel of Death, face to face, I spoke to him. I saw his four faces, and he explained what each of those faces meant. What was related in that mystical experience was the result of our meeting.

'Izrā'īl (ﷺ) is an angel, not a small person like one of us. His foot rests in *awwal* (the realm of the emergence of souls), and his head rests in *ākhirah* (the hereafter, where each thing returns to its source). The chair on which he sat was two hundred and fifty miles wide. The world was like a mere dot within the pupil of his eye. You could see all the worlds and all the creations in them—from the tiniest ant to everything in creation—within that dot within his eye. The four faces faced the four directions.[2]

When the destiny, the *nāsib,* of a person's life comes to an end, one of the lights on this tree called *sidratul-muntahā* will stop blinking, indicating that his allotted food, or *rizq,* has run out. Then 'Izrā'īl (ﷺ) stretches out his hand, and three people issue forth from it and go to fetch that life. I could see all of this. When he stretches out his hand in another direction, three more issue forth while he looks on.

How can this be fully described? If you were to see it, your liver would burn to cinders. Only to the true man does 'Izrā'īl's face appear

1. In the 1950s, Bawa Muhaiyaddeen related *The Ten Mystical Experiences,* which has yet to be published.

2. For a fuller explanation of the four faces and the four directions see *To Die Before Death: The Sufi Way of Life,* by M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, pages 99-101.

beautiful. That face, which is like milk, is a beautiful face. But he has another face, a face of fire. For the sinners against God he has a black face—too terrifying to behold. I could hear them screaming when the black face looked at them. When the face of fire scorches them, they cry out in pain and terror.

So, 'Izrā'īl (ع) has one beautiful face reserved for the virtuous ones who serve God. 'Izrā'īl (ع) will draw such a life toward him with love, much like a newborn baby gently suckles the milk from its mother's breast, without causing her any pain.

In this mystical experience 'Izrā'īl (ع) said, "Look." As I looked, he explained how he captures each kind of life. When he holds out his hand, people go forth to claim the lives. They have horns on their heads and swords and knives in their hands. Seeing this, the people who are about to die shout and scream in terror. I saw with my own eyes the way their souls were being captured.

This work is not done by God, but by the Angel of Death. Which of his faces will we see? The one that corresponds to the actions we performed and the kind of qualities we had in this world. The black face is for those who follow satan and are involved in the actions of satan. The souls of such people are gathered by the black face. The face of fire is meant to capture the souls of jinns and fairies. The beautiful face that looks like milk is for the good ones and the prophets. This is how the souls of different people are captured. When 'Izrā'īl (ع) stretches out his hand, it goes all the way from *awwal* to *ākhirah*. That is 'Izrā'īl (ع).

If we see the horrible face and hands, we wail in terror. We must seek a way to avoid being trapped by them. If we worship idols, if we make statues or draw figures, God will say, "Since you made these forms, give life to them. You have taken on the job of creating, which only I can do. Since you have set out to do something which is My duty, go ahead and complete it. Give it a soul, a *rūh*. Give it life. Give it food." But man cannot do that, and God decrees the appropriate punishment.

There are so many mysteries contained in that mystical experience. If I were to tell you everything, you would not be able to comprehend these things with your scientific knowledge. But if you knew the truth, you would not hold on to anything but God, for one day you will be questioned and will have to answer.

God alone must protect you. Only God can protect man *(insān).* I do not know what else I can tell you about that section. If I were to tell you, you might run away.

Anything else?

QUESTION: When Bawa describes this world, he talks about it being a university and a stage. Apparently the work here is for men to develop and become God's messengers. He also has mentioned that the prophets have come a certain number of times to this world. I wonder whether the prophets, when they are not here, manifest themselves in the other eighteen thousand universes, and what the work is that goes on there.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: They can be anywhere. They can be all over. Where is the sun? When there is no sun, there is a moon. Is that not so? In the same way, when there are no longer prophets, there will be *qutbs.* The *qutbs* and the prophets exist forever. The only thing to feel sad about is that we do not have the eyes to see them or the wisdom to talk to them. That is the only problem. But there is no proof that they are not here. If we had the eyes to see them and the wisdom to talk to them, we could do so. But we do not have those instruments. Whether it is Allah or the *Rasūl* ﷺ or the *Qutb* (ra), we say that they are not here simply because we do not have the eyes to see them.

Bawa Muhaiyaddeen begins to sing:

He will appear,
He will appear wherever we turn to look.
He is mingled in our embryo and our form.
He will appear everywhere we turn to look.
He is mingled in the embryo and in the form.
He is impressed within our wisdom and in our
state of *īmān,*
That treasure of bliss,
That treasure of bliss!

See Him as the wisdom within the wisdom
And as the clarity within the heart,

As the wisdom within wisdom
And the clarity within the heart.
See Him as the fragrance within your qualities.
See Him as the fragrance within your qualities.

If you intend Him with melting love,
His grace and His qualities will melt and flow.
His qualities and His grace will melt,
And the light of your heart will shine.
Dispel all your thoughts.
Dispel your thoughts and this life,
Which is like writing on water.
If we imbibe that treasure of *gnānam* (wisdom)
Which is the word of grace,
And if we make our hearts clear,
We can know God's qualities.

O treasures of *gnānam!*
Look for Him with melting hearts.
Look for Him with melting hearts,
O treasures of *gnānam.*
Open your hearts and look at Him,
Your state will prosper
And grace will flow in abundance.
Joy will abound in the vanishing of the 'I' and
the 'you',
And the light of grace will be seen.

Our bliss will appear from within Him.
The whole body will be fragrant.
The heart will bloom,
And the fragrance of the flower will be manifest.
The light of *gnānam* will appear in the eyes,
And every intention will speak to Him.
Every one of your intentions will speak to Him.
You will see the wisdom
That realizes the state in which you and He are one.

If the heart melts,
My precious children, if your hearts melt,
If the differences of the 'you' and the 'I' are dispelled,
If ignorance and discrimination are cut away,
If all our divisions are burnt up,
If we throw away all our differences,
If arrogance is pulled out by its roots,
If the darkness of ignorance leaves us,
If falsehood, thieving, treachery, and envy leave us,
If all those evils are eliminated,
The beautiful qualities will appear.
His grace and His wealth will be seen in our faces,
The heart free of darkness will resplend all over,
Our hearts will fill with the light and fragrance
of all the heavens.
The here and the hereafter will fly away,
And we will see the beauty which has no birth
or death.
The beauty of birthlessness and deathlessness will
be seen.

Only the light of love will be seen.
The light of grace will be seen.
Eternal life will be seen in everything,
And we will be within every life
With that fragrance, with those qualities and actions
and duties.
That compassion will be seen.
Compassion will be seen.
You will see the ones who love and trust God,
Speaking with the God who is beyond *āthi* and *anāthi*
And before the beginningless beginning.
You will see all lives as you see your own life.
Seeking to do the duty which knows no birth or death,
You will see that precious birth as a resplendent light,
And your inner being will resplend as the kingdom
of God.

All praise will be His,
Every one of our duties will appear within the light
of *al-hamd.*
Every breath will speak of Him.
Our mind and desires and thoughts will all be subdued
within Him.
The feeling of 'I' and 'you' will die away,
And we will see all lives as being like our own.

If man knows the truth,
What else will he see in his innermost heart other
than God?
That Lord is somewhere where we cannot see or
know Him,
But if our wisdom resplends we will see Him
within that.
That Lord exists where mind and desire cannot
find Him,
But if wisdom and love resplend, we will see
Him there.

Such a one will become younger and younger and
younger in age.
He will be seen as an infant who knows no birth
or death,
He will appear like a precious infant.
His qualities will show love and comfort to all lives,
He will speak like a precious infant,
He will embrace all with love and kiss them.

That child who is God,
In the state where he merges with God,
That one who becomes an infant of God,
That infant babe becomes a treasure for both worlds.
When we become that infant,
Filled with those qualities and love,
When that beauty and fragrance
And those qualities and actions come into us,

We will become the infant babe of God
Who will love all lives and embrace them.
We will be the infant babe
Who will embrace all lives and all hearts.
We will be the infant who will comfort
And give solace to all hearts.

If this state were to exist within man,
Man would become an infant who would never die.
He would live as an infant baby of God.
He would belong to all lives.
He would dwell within all lives, speak to them, and
enjoy the speech.

If a man attains that state,
He will reach a life which has no death,
He will do his duty in the world forever.
He will be a loving friend to all lives.
He will see all lives as his own,
And he will dwell within all lives, serving them.
Āmīn. Āmīn.

If we cut away our mind, if we chase away our qualities, and if we can acquire God's qualities, His beauty, His actions, and His goodness, we will become His baby.

When we embrace Him within our hearts He becomes a baby to us, and when He embraces us we become a baby to Him. Just as we embrace a baby to our hearts, we must embrace God to our hearts. Then He will make us a baby and embrace us to His heart.

This is what we call merging with God. This is a state we must seek to achieve. So we must take the form of the infant and embrace God and the form of His qualities in our hearts. Those beautiful qualities and that wisdom and love are needed to acquire this state within us. Then we will reach Him.

Only when both hearts are intermingled and have become one will we have no want. We will not lack anything. When both hearts embrace, one within the other, on that day we will have achieved victory, freedom, and a life without birth or death. That is the day

we will have everything we yearn for.

Now, my children, embracing God within our hearts and being embraced within His heart is the highest and most exalted state. We must attain this. It is for this reason that we came to the world. From this station we must reach the state of completeness that allows us to merge with Him. We must know this.

If we do not reach this state, our life will have been in vain. All we have learned will have been in vain. Our prayers will have been in vain, and all our worship and meditation will have been in vain. It is only when one joins the other, when one embraces the other, that we will see victory in our search. We must try our best to attain that state. That, my precious children, is what you must seek with determination. That is the purpose of our life.

SUSAN SOLLEDER: It sounds very good, but you can't do it in just one step. Which is the most important to work on? If there was one thing, what would that be?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: There was a man who donated much wealth and money in the name of God. He had a beautiful wife and a very beautiful child. The child was about ten or twelve years old. He loved the child dearly and was very affectionate toward him. Because of his love for the child, he began to forget God. As he went on acquiring more and more wealth, more and more riches, and more and more titles and fame, he began to forget God.

Then one day the son was missing. The man ran here and there, shouting and sending people out to search for his son. He sent watchmen and guards and soldiers. He searched all over the land, but he could not find his son. He beat his head, shouted and wailed, and ran about until finally he came to Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah (رضي الله عنها).[3] He came wailing, "O mother, O one of divine wisdom, my son is missing." He began to shout and beat his head and pummel his chest.

Then Rābi'atul-'Adawiyyah (رضي الله عنها) said, "O man, come here. Your son is lost, is he?"

"O my son, my son! I guarded him more than my life. He is more precious to me than my own life."

3. See footnote, page 111.

Then Rābi'ah ﷺ said, "Do you think he is your son, O man? God gave you so much money, so many riches, a big house, fame, and titles. He gave you food, He gave you eyes and a nose. And He gave you a beautiful wife. God gave you all this.

"That same God has been missing from the lives of this human generation. He has been gone from them now for a long time. He has been lost to this human generation. O man, God created man in such excellent mode, but they have turned into animals and lost Him long ago. But did any of you search for Him? Were you worried that He was lost? O ungrateful human beings, did you search for God even one day? He has been lost from the human generation for so long!

"He is the only One of His kind. Did any of you search for Him? He belongs to everyone. He created everyone. He is God. He is the Father to everyone and the Child to everyone. He has been lost from this human generation for such a long time, but did you search for Him? Did you go looking for Him? O ungrateful one, did you even think of Him? Didn't you wonder where He was? Did you go in search of Him?

"O ungrateful wretch of a man, you left this One who gave you so much, but you are shouting for this son who was lost only today. God has been missing for such a long time. You idiotic man, go and search for Him. Everything belongs to Him. Go shouting and searching for God. Everything here is His property, everything belongs to Him. He is the One you should search for and shout for. You can look for your son later."

The father ran to the mosque and shouted, "O my God! O my Lord!" Within a short time someone came running with the news, "Your son has been found. They are bringing him home."

In the same way you must think about how long God has been missing. He has been lost by all of us. We have lost faith in the God who has given us so much. We have been ungrateful to Him. We have beaten Him and chased Him away. He has been lost to us for so long that we have forgotten Him. He has been given up by this human generation and is lost to us. He has been missing for so long, yet you have not searched for Him.

If you would try to find Him, He would give you all the things you have lost. But you forget Him and just go on enjoying everything

He gave you. If you seek Him, He will fulfill whatever intention is within you.

O mankind, think of Him. If the *īmān* and certitude and determination to search for Him come into your heart, He will be there. But if you search for a husband instead, how can He come? There is a husband looking for you, and you are looking for a husband, but you should be looking for the One who ordained you to be a pair, shouldn't you? If you search for Him, you will get everything. God will bring back to you whatever you have lost.

But you have forgotten Him. You have made a dog into a god, you have made satan and demons into gods, you have made the earth into a god, fire into a god, water into a god, and air into a god. Cows and goats have been made into idols, money has been made a god, and you have made your desires into gods. You worship the sun and moon as gods. You worship iron and steel as gods. You have made everything into idols, even snakes and scorpions and things that eat you and drink your blood. You make them all into gods and worship them. You make statues, perform *pūjās,*[4] give offerings and dedicate your lives to them and chant mantras to them.

You practice yoga, standing on your head like a monkey or on one leg like a crane. Endless miracles *(sitthis)* like these are performed by animals and birds and insects! Some snakes hang head downward from the tree. Some fish can walk on water. Birds fly in the sky. Vultures, with their sense of smell, can locate dead carcasses to eat. Eagles can soar in the sky and suddenly swoop down to catch a bird or fish. Chickens can sit on the limb of a tree and sleep with eyes closed. Crocodiles and other water animals lurk by the water's edge to snatch and drag away anything that approaches.

You waste your time doing what animals and birds and fish and crabs and scorpions do, and claim you are performing miracles. You stand on one leg like a crane meditating for a fish. You do these meditations and *sitthis* and yogas and how does it serve you? Does it help you at all? Why don't you do what man needs to do!

What is man's miracle? What miracle must he perform? Man must find out what the miracles of God are. God's qualities are His

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4. *pūjās* (T) Adoration of deities (Hindu) with rituals such as lighting lamps, chanting mantras, and making offerings.

miracles. His actions are His miracles. His duties are His miracles. His compassion and patience are His miracles. He dwells within all lives, embracing them with love and compassion, doing His duty to them, and comforting them. The moment some danger threatens us we say, "My God!" and He is there. He comes. As soon as you slip and fall, you say, "My God!" and He comes to help you up.

This is the miracle of God. It is the miracle of His qualities that all lives bow to in respect. If you have God's qualities, if you have God's love, if you have determination and faith within you, then all lives will respect you and bow to you. They will bow to those qualities, to the love that is God's love, to the duties that are God's duties, to the actions that are God's actions. They will worship the compassion and beneficence that are God's compassion and beneficence.

But you have not acquired these qualities. Instead, you are mimicking what birds and cows and goats do. You are trying to do the acts of monkeys and dogs. You are doing yoga, *sitthis,* and mantras, and trying to fly. Why are you trying to fly? This is craziness. Birds can fly beautifully. You have to find out what you can do.

Remember you are a human being! Think of what the miracle of man must be and do that. The only true miracle is the miracle of God. You must perform God's miracle—your qualities must become His qualities. If you can perform that miracle, all lives will respect you and worship you. Acquire those qualities and learn wisdom. Acquire love. Try to act with God's actions. If you can open your heart and do your duty to all lives, just as God does, then you will see that same state within you. *Āmīn.*

August 13, 1979

Session 18

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Session 18

QUESTION: Being aware that we are very weak, how can we overcome feelings of insufficiency when searching for God and the qualities of God?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: When we plant seeds, we cannot know which ones will grow. There is a tiny point within each one which has the potential to grow, but before we sow the seeds we have to plow the land properly and spread the fertilizer evenly throughout the area. Then all the seeds will grow, and we will have a good crop.

If a seed doesn't grow, it is not the fault of the seed. The fault lies elsewhere, either in the nature of the soil, or in how we plow the land, or how much water it gets, or how much fertilizer we add. Some seeds grow into short plants and some grow to be tall; some bear flowers and some do not; some produce yams and some do not. So where does the fault lie? The fault could lie with the farmer who drove the tractor. Maybe he did not use it properly. Maybe he did not plow the land equally in all places or distribute the fertilizer evenly. Maybe he was looking here and there and became careless. The farmer has to plow with care, pay careful attention to the soil, add fertilizer carefully, and sow the seeds in an orderly way. He must make sure that the place where the seeds fall has been attended to properly. If he has plowed, fertilized, and watered all areas equally and carefully with determination, attention, and faith, then each seed will grow equally well and give him good produce. Isn't that so?

In the same way, if our wisdom, faith, determination, and certitude are strong, and if our willpower and our efforts to reach the goal are strong, then that is sufficient. That is what will benefit us.

Anything else?

MONA SCHWARTZ: I will be leaving tomorrow. Is there some way

that I can be feeling your presence at all times and be in contact with you, so I will not feel lonely?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The body needs water. Thirst assails us even before hunger does. Whether we are in the desert or the jungle, our first need is for water. Even if we give up our house and go wandering about, we still need water. More than food we need water. Why? Water relieves our thirst; it is needed for a parched tongue. It satisfies our fatigue and washes our bodies. Is that not so?

The body is aware of its need for water and goes in search of it. Whether we are in the desert or the jungle, in town or at home, our body makes us seek water. No matter where we journey, we are aware of that feeling of thirst even before we feel hunger. Doesn't your body have a need for water?

In the same way, we need truth. We need love, we need wisdom, and we need God. Just as our body seeks water, just as our tongue needs water, if we feel the need for wisdom and faith, then whether we are in the city, the jungle, or anywhere, we must find them. As the body and tongue search for water, we must search for truth.

When we are thirsty, our body will not let us forget. In our thoughts, in our dreams, in our feelings, in our physical awareness, and in our tongue, we will constantly be aware of the need for water. Because of those reminders, we will never be able to forget it. In the same way, if our inner state needs truth, we will not be able to forget. But if that water called truth is not needed, then we will have periods of forgetfulness.

That is how it is.

Children, is there anything else?

JOHN A. SAUERS: In my life, ever since I was young, I have always tried to serve others and be kind, but at this point in my life I often fall into just pleasing someone for the sake of pleasing, even though it might not be the correct action to take. Just by habit, I end up doing something to please the person. I would like to find out the distinction between doing service and showing compassion to other people without falling into the trap of pleasing people just for the sake of pleasing.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Take a cow. What does it do? It gives you milk. Even when it bears a calf, it gives its milk to both you and the calf. The cow does all that. The bull plows the fields. It will draw a cart and carry whatever burden you want it to carry. The bull helps you in so many ways. But after doing all this for you, it still has to find its own food. It nibbles the grass and chews its cud, shaking its head up and down. You don't even give water to the cow or bull; they have to find their own water in a running stream. You don't do anything for them, but they keep working for you anyway. They do everything for you, even though you do almost nothing for them. They do not expect anything from you in return.

Until the end of their lives, the cow and bull keep on struggling for your sake. With great effort, the cow gives milk, which means it is giving its own blood. By giving you that milk, it dedicates its body and life in duty to you. The cow does not have selfish intentions. It does not think of asking for a palace or a large house, or for any reward. It does not ask for clothes. It does not think about wearing a coat. It does not ask for any of these, even though it works so hard on your behalf. The cow serves you selflessly.

Whether its owner is rich or poor or a beggar, the cow serves in the same way. It yields milk equally for a rich shipping mogul, an ordinary householder, or a beggar. It gives milk selflessly to anyone who is looking after it at that time. A bull does not plow any better for a rich man. In doing its duty it is not seeking to please someone. There is a thing called love. Anyone who treats these animals with love, they will serve with love. They do their duty as it should be done. Look how much they serve us.

The horse also does a lot of duty for us without expecting anything in return. It has no selfishness. It seeks no rewards. It shows no distinction between a rich man and an ordinary man. It peacefully does whatever job it has to do.

May you also do your duty in this way. That is duty. That is how God does His duty, without any selfishness. If you too can do it like this, then it is true duty. That is the highest, most exalted duty that can be performed.

Now, when an animal that has done so much selfless service grows old, when its nerves and its muscles become tired, what do we do? We send it to the butcher shop and from there to the supermarket.

Having pulled the plow and given its blood as milk, it now gives even its flesh to be cut up and sold by the pound as meat. It has dedicated itself to you in life, and it continues to do so even in death.

In the same way, service to God for the benefit of the people is the greatest, most exalted duty of all. If a lowly animal like a cow can do so much service, should not man, who has the exalted wisdom called divine analytic wisdom, do even more? That is true duty. Do you understand?

My children, if you have any doubts, anything your mind cannot understand, something you do not know, or anything pertaining to wisdom that you cannot find answers for, you must open your hearts and ask. Your duty is to ask your father, and if he knows, he will give you the answer. He will tell you what he has learned from his own experiences. If he does not know, he will ask you and learn from you. Therefore, you must ask whatever is in your hearts that needs to be cleared up.

CLAUDIA SCHULTE: Sometimes I feel imprisoned by my thoughts, and then it feels that nothing is real and that I am cut off from wisdom and from the source of wisdom and God, and I feel as if I am half-dead. Other times I feel as if I am hearing or seeing from my heart and I am connected with the source of wisdom. At times when I am sitting here with Bawa, tears come to my eyes and I feel more alive. I am wondering, when I find myself imprisoned by my thoughts like that, how can I get out of that state and see clearly with my heart?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: In the times when Prophet Muhammad, the *Rasūl* ﷺ, was alive, an Arab came to him one day and said, "O *Rasūlullāh,* satan will not let me sleep. He will not let me sit in peace, he will not let me eat, he will not let me walk, he will not let me work, he is continuously harassing me. He is upsetting my whole state. I am unable to withstand this torment. O *Rasūlullāh,* please make satan let go of me." So saying, he wept bitterly.

Then Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked, "Is that so? Did satan do this to you? Is satan causing you so much trouble? I will look into this matter. Please come back tomorrow."

No sooner had the man left than satan himself arrived, disguised

in the form of an Arab. Approaching the Prophet ﷺ, he said, "O *Rasūlullāh,* are you not the Prophet to all, without discrimination? Are you not the *Rasūl* to all children? Are you not the Prophet who helps both good and bad people? Are you not the *Rasūl?"*

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Yes, that is true. Are you satan?"

"Yes, that is true. I am satan. That Arab who just left complained bitterly about me, but please listen to my troubles and help me get relief. That Arab will not let me sleep in peace. He will not let me sit, he will not let me stand, he will not let me eat. He causes me untold suffering. He has taken all my property, he has taken my house, he has taken my possessions, he has taken everything that is mine. He is causing me unbearable torment. Please see that he does not come and torment me like this. Please save me from this agony."

"All right, come back the day after tomorrow," the Prophet ﷺ said. And satan left.

The following day, the Arab returned. "O Prophet, satan will not leave me alone. He is still harassing me all the time."

"Is that so?" the Prophet ﷺ said. "But just after you left yesterday, satan came here complaining about you. He says it is you who will not leave him in peace. He says you have taken his possessions, everything he owns. What property of his do you have?"

"O my Prophet, I have taken nothing. Not his house, not his possessions, nothing. I have taken nothing from him."

"Is that so?" asked the Prophet ﷺ. "In that case, what do you have in your house?"

"O Prophet, I have two young daughters that I must give away in marriage," the Arab replied. "I have struggled and worked hard for so long, and I have accumulated a little gold and a few precious stones to be given to them as a dowry. I earned this with the sweat of my brow. This is all I have, and it is only for the sake of my two daughters."

"Is that so?" said Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. "Go immediately to your house, pick up all those things and throw them away on the road. Then come back tomorrow."

The Arab agreed. He went straight home, picked up the gold and precious stones and threw them onto the road. Immediately, satan's followers came running out from everywhere to pick them up. They knocked heads with each other, fighting over the gems.

All the children of satan grabbed everything that had been thrown out and then ran away.

The Arab went home and lay down to sleep. He slept very soundly, a beautiful, peaceful sleep. He felt no hunger, even though he hadn't eaten that evening. His face became peaceful and fresh looking.

The next day he went back to the Prophet (ﷺ) feeling very peaceful and happy. "O *Rasūlullāh,"* he said, "in all my forty-five years, last night was the only night I had a peaceful sleep. I did exactly as you said. I threw away everything in the house, and immediately I had perfect peace. I am so happy."

"Are you comfortable now?" asked the Prophet (ﷺ). "All right, sit down for a while."

Soon after this satan arrived. "O *Rasūlullāh,* today I slept in peace. That man did not trouble me at all. I had a perfectly restful sleep. In all this time, today was the first day I slept peacefully. I did not even know whether it was day or night, I was in such a deep sleep." The Arab was still seated there, listening to satan's story.

"O *Rasūlullāh,"* satan continued, "this Arab told you I was harassing him. But please let me tell you something. Long ago, at the time that I caused harm to Adam, God cursed me and flung me down into this world of hell because of my envy and jealousy. God said to me, 'Hell has been decreed for you and your followers. All the things that belong to hell will be yours. All perishable things will be your property. All evil things will belong to you. All things that change will be yours. They will be your share.'

"In this way, God decreed for me and my followers all the evil qualities as well as the evil actions of murder, treachery, and revenge. God has given us the right to commit mischief or evil whenever we want to. Thus we commit murders and promote evil. We act treacherously toward people, we drink their blood, and we stir up jealousy among them. We become angry with people and perform hateful, evil actions. God gave earth, woman, and gold to us. That is what He said is ours in this world. Our life consists of all the things of the world that were discarded by God. He has given them to us to enjoy. Indulging in these hells is our heaven. The world has been given to me and my followers as our peace and happiness.

"O *Rasūlullāh,* these things belong to us. They are not permitted

for your followers. What treasures have been given as theirs? The qualities of God, the actions of God, and faith in God. O *Rasūlullāh,* since your life is in heaven, the lives of your followers should also be in heaven. True heaven is God's kingdom. That treasure is only for you and your followers. Our treasure and our life is hell, which is this world. By enjoying this world, we attain hell. But those who follow your teachings and have total faith and the intention for God will dwell in heaven and receive the qualities of God as their true wealth.

"O *Rasūlullāh,* people like this Arab say they follow you, but they are not truly your followers, for they covet my property and my followers' property; they covet our houses, our money, and our possessions. They want *māyā* (illusion). They take my things, my share, my property, and then they slander my name shouting, 'Satan, go away!' They live in my house and try to chase me out of it. They take my wife and try to chase me from her. These people say they have perfect faith in you and declare certitude in you, but what they really enjoy is my property. They are actually my followers. They have transformed themselves into my children, but they say that they are following you and then complain to you about me. These people are two-faced hypocrites. They eat foods that are not permissible.

"O *Rasūlullāh,* you must never believe them or their words. Please tell them to stop taking my property, for whatever belongs to me is not permissible for those who believe only in you and in God. They are not allowed to covet my property and my things. Please tell your followers this."

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Although you are satan, what you have said is the truth."

Satan continued, "Occult powers and miracles are our tricks. We use them to control and transform people. These followers of yours use the same things and then mock us for using them. It is our job to worship things other than God, but those who claim to be your followers use our occult powers, perform our miracles, and idolize the same things that we do. Are they really your followers then? No. They are hypocrites. They are double-tongued. They are on both sides. Please tell these people not to enter our domain or covet or take what belongs to us. Please tell your followers this. I do not seek them out in order to drag them over to my side. They are the ones

who come in search of me!"

The *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) answered, "At my command the Arab threw away all the things he had been saving for forty-five years. Even though he had so much love for his children, and even though he had acquired those things through honest hard work, he responded to my word immediately by throwing away both the things and his desire for them. Immediately he found peace." That is how the *Rasūlullāh* (ﷺ) answered satan.

In the same way, for the past five or six years you have asked so many questions and heard so many stories and explanations. But have you thrown away even one of the things I asked you to discard? Upon hearing just one word, that man threw away everything. Have you discarded even one of the things I asked you to discard? No, you have not. You did not listen to your father's word. You have been told about one hundred thousand things that needed to be discarded, but have you discarded even one? You have not discarded even one quality. So how can you attain peace? That man threw his things away and gained immediate peace.

Throw them away, then you will have peace. Throw at least one bad quality away once in a while. Then you will see a difference.

NANCY SHABASON: I was holding on to a lot of attachments before I came to Bawa and now I see those things as something like fate. Bawa says we must try to reach God and God's qualities. I don't want these to also turn out to just be attachments.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You may have heard the example I gave earlier of the cow and the bull. I believe you may have understood something from that story. Now, listen to another story that will help you progress on the path.

In the jungle there was once a lion that would eat everyone who came along a certain path, so people began to avoid that path. Then one day a hunter made an iron cage and placed it on the path. After a while, the lion came that way in pursuit of a deer. As they both came near to that place, the deer ran right past the cage and escaped, but the lion fell into it. Immediately the trap door came down and locked the lion in.

When people heard the lion had been trapped, they began to use that path again. As each person passed, the lion would whine, "You are my god! Please save me from this plight! Please let me go. I will worship you by placing you within my heart and my liver." He made many promises. He bowed down and took all sorts of oaths. But not one person agreed to open the door. As soon as they saw the lion, they ran away. Even though the lion made endless promises to do many favors and treat them as gods, no one would let him out.

Eight days passed and the lion was famished. Then along came a man who was a fool, like me. Once again the lion begged and made all sorts of promises. "Please open this cage! I will keep you in my heart and worship you as my family deity. I will never forget you. I promise you in the name of God."

The man thought, "Oh, this lion really sounds sincere," and he opened the trap door. Immediately, the lion jumped on the man and caught him. The man cried, "You made all those promises! What are you doing?"

"You have certainly done me a great service by releasing me. But I have been hungry for eight days," growled the lion. "I am so hungry and weak that I cannot even walk. Only if I eat you will I have the strength to run and hunt other animals."

The man pleaded, "But you promised. You said you would not harm me."

"O man," the lion said, "when hunger comes, good qualities fly away. Wisdom, honesty, and integrity fly away. Everything flies away. If I made promises when I had hunger pains, you cannot treat those as real promises. I was suffering, so my wisdom and intellect were impaired by my hunger. You cannot count them as true promises. But because you have done me this great favor, I will put you in my stomach and worship you forever as a god. If I don't eat you, how can I have the strength to catch another animal? Right now I cannot even walk."

"How can you do this to me? It's not fair! You made so many promises. Where have all those promises gone?" Then the man got an idea. "Do you think this is a reasonable way to act? At least let's get a few other opinions."

The lion relented. "All right, we'll get three other opinions. If all

three agree that I am right, then I will eat you. If not, I'll let you go."

The man agreed. So they walked along, and the first thing they saw was a palmyra tree. The lion told it, "I was trapped inside a cage for eight days. I didn't have a morsel of food to eat, and I was very hungry. No one would agree to let me out, but finally this man came and released me. It is true that I made him all sorts of promises. I promised I wouldn't eat him and even said I would worship him, so he opened the cage. But by then I was so hungry that I was on the verge of death. If this man truly wants to save me, he must also give me food. He is the only food available. If I drink his blood and eat his muscles, I will gain some strength. Only then has he truly saved me."

The palmyra tree said, "What you say is true. You must eat him. Man is a horrible being. Eat him up."

In disbelief, the man asked, "O palmyra tree, is that fair? I was good to this lion. I saved him from death, yet you say he should eat me."

"Man, what did you do for him?" the palmyra tree asked. "You merely opened the lock and let him out. That is all. And what did you do for me? You watered me for a few days, but after I grew tall you took my leaves to thatch your roofs and make baskets, then you stripped my fiber to make rope. I struggled and writhed in pain. When I grew still taller I gave you fruits and seeds and the tubers that grew from the seeds, and I gave you sweet jaggery from the fruits. You have taken all this from me for a hundred and fifty years. I even gave you many children and each one served you in the same generous way.

"One day, when you decide I'm getting too old, you will cut me down and split my trunk while I writhe in pain. With pickaxes and other sharp tools, you will scrape me and torment me, turn me into logs, then use me to build houses for your comfort. Even after that you won't leave me alone. Eventually you will hack me up into firewood and burn me, turning me into ashes. Even as ash, you won't leave me in peace. You will spread me in the field and plow over me, and then take the things that are nourished by my ashes.

"I give you so much and still you cut me off at the roots. I give you so much, but what do you do? Make me suffer, torment me,

and cause me great agony. Man is such an ungrateful being. You only did one thing for the lion; you unlocked the door of that cage. I did so much for you, yet you destroy me and my entire family. You destroy not only me but all who help you. There is no creature more ungrateful than man. Therefore, lion, eat him up!"

The lion was very pleased. They walked on and soon met a cow. The lion asked the same question of the cow. "O cow, I was trapped in a cage for eight days. I made promises to all the people who passed by and begged them to free me. This man felt pity for me and released me from the cage. I made those promises only because I was suffering so much from hunger. It is true that I am grateful to him, and I will certainly show my gratitude after filling my stomach with him. Once I eat him, he will be in my stomach and I will worship him from my heart. But in my present state I can hardly walk, so how can I run and chase after prey? The only way I can save my life is to eat him for some strength. So, what must I do? Release him or eat him to save my life?"

"Eat him up! Man is so ungrateful. Eat him. Do not trust a human being. Not ever!" said the cow.

Again in disbelief, the man pleaded, "O cow, why do you say this? The lion forgets what a service I did for him. You are giving an unfair verdict, just like the palmyra tree."

"O man," the cow replied, "all you did was open that lock for him—only one kind act. But look at the torments you human beings inflict on us. Look at my own case. My mother did so much for you. She plowed the land, dragged tons of manure from your home to the farm, and pulled ten or twenty people in a cart. You lived in a palace while my mother was left to suffer the heat of the sun and the cold of the rain. Even when she was drenched by the rain and beaten by the wind, you did not offer her any shelter or protection.

"Under such conditions, my mother gave birth to me, and in her compassion she tried to feed me some milk. But you tied me up while you drained away all her milk, gave some to your family, then sold the rest to the shop. My mother shed tears of agony because there was no milk left for me. Then, after all her milk was drained away, you untied me and I ran to tug at the empty udder. Because of my lack of wisdom, when I found no milk, I butted my mother's tummy. Not only did you cause me suffering, but you made me

unknowingly cause suffering to my mother. My poor mother had six children. Every one of those children suffered, and my mother also suffered. You did the same thing with each of us.

"Later, while I looked on, you took my mother to the butcher shop, had her cut up, and distributed the flesh among your family. How we cried and wept. Like this, you have been destroying my entire family.

"I plowed for you. I did so much for you. I gave you milk. I did everything my mother did for you. Did you ever think of that? Were you ever grateful? No, not you. In spite of doing all this service for you, we still have to find our own food. We work for you day and night, yet after that we have to go to the field to graze for grass and seek water from the stream. We have to lie in the heat of the sun or the cold of the night. We do not live comfortably like you in your big houses. We do so much for you and suffer so much for your sake. We dedicate our bodies and our whole lives in service to you, yet you never think of us, you ungrateful beings!

"You did just one act of kindness for this lion and now you make demands. You merely opened the lock, and yet you ask for gratitude. Man is the most ungrateful of all the creatures. He is the most evil. O lion, eat him, finish him off! Man is so ungrateful."

So two out of three had been asked, and there was only one left. The man and the lion walked on. Next they met a fox. The lion repeated his story to the fox.

The fox thought, "Oh, this man has gotten himself into a jam here. He is in danger. Like a fool, he opened the lion's cage and now the lion is going to eat him." The fox listened intently to everything the lion said. "Hmm, if I tell this lion the man is right, he will eat me up. If I try to talk reasonably to him, I will die."

The fox realized he would have to be very tricky. So while the lion was telling the story, the fox pretended to be deaf. Each time the lion said something, the fox said, "Eh? I can't hear. What are you saying? What are you saying?" The lion tried shouting into his ears, but still the fox pretended not to hear.

"I am deaf," he said, "I can't hear your story. Let's go back to the place where this event happened and you can show me exactly what took place. I must see for myself. Then I will decide what is fair."

So all three went back to the cage, and the fox asked the lion,

"Now, where were you? Show me."

"I was in the cage," the lion said.

"Eh? I can't hear. Let me see how it was. Show me where you were." And the lion went into the cage.

"Then what did you do, O man? Was the door open like that when you came this way? Show me how the door was at that time." So the man closed the cage and locked it. "Have you locked the cage? All right, now let me see. Pull the door to check if it is firmly locked."

When the man had done so, the fox said, "O man, next time you see a dangerous being, avoid it and run away. When you go to help such a being, the result will be the loss of your own life. In the same way, if you go to advise a person who has no wisdom, you will lose your life. If you go to help someone evil, you will lose your life. In the future, don't be such a fool, poking your nose into things like this. The lion is from a tribe that kills people, drinks their blood, and eats their liver, yet you went to help him. You fool, run away and escape with your life while you can."

The lion said, "Hey! You locked me up again! What is this?"

"This man helped you and you tried to kill him," said the fox. "So it is much better that you stay exactly where you are. Let him escape and let me escape also. You stay where you are!" The fox hooted at the lion and started to run.

The lion was furious. "O fox, have you deceived me?" The fox hooted again and ran. "I will get you!" the lion said.

"If you escape, we'll see! But for now, I am free to run away." And the fox ran off.

It is exactly like this with all your evil qualities. You must not give room to them. You must not be taken in by false promises and tears. You must not feel pity for these qualities, because they are the very things that will eat you. They will kill you. Like the lion, this monkey mind of yours will make so many promises. You must not believe in any of those false promises.

There are evil animals inside us. Anger is a lion. We have many such animals within. We must trap them inside an iron cage and use our wisdom to escape. Like the fox, we must escape very cleverly, with cunning. We must escape and extricate ourselves from these illusions *(māyā),* from the desire for earth and woman, and from our evil qualities. If we do not succeed in escaping, if we give these quali-

ties everything they ask for, if we believe in the promises they make, we will end up being murdered by them.

Therefore, we must use our wisdom. Act cleverly and escape from this world of hell and *māyā*. Escape from this net, this cage, of illusion. Escape from these evil, wicked animal qualities within, which will destroy us. Escape from these qualities of ignorance. We need to find a path of escape so we can do our true duty. If we can do that duty, if we can acquire God's qualities and serve God, then we will escape.

Understand this, act accordingly, and do your duty. You must work at a job and also do your duties on the path of truth, without any attachment. If you set out to help a lion, you will lose your head. If you give in to your evil qualities, they will eat you up.

Know the difference between right and wrong. Understanding both, turn to the right direction and do your duty. That will give you benefit. Do you understand?

My children, if even one child out of a hundred progresses on the path of God, that one will be sufficient to bring benefit to ten million people. And if one hundred children out of ten million turn to the right path, they will be enough to bring the grace of God to protect the whole world. So, if at least that many children will turn to the path of truth and the path of God, their goodness will be enough to protect the world.

Just as one cowboy is enough to herd a thousand cows, if one out of a thousand children becomes a true man, that one will be able to comfort a thousand children. He can protect them. If God turns one child in a thousand to the right path, giving him completeness of wisdom and His own qualities, that child will be blessed with the plenitude of His wealth. It is my constant prayer that God will bless us in that way. That is a treasure that will never diminish. This is my eternal prayer to God.

May He grant us this prayer. *Āmīn.*

August 15, 1979

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Session 19

QUESTION: Could Bawa please speak about faith?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Faith is like the taproot which gives strength to a tree. If the taproot hasn't grown downward properly, the tree will not have its support, and then, when a gale strikes, the tree will fall over. To keep it strong enough to withstand winds and gales, the tree has four deep roots, the taproot in the middle and three others near the surface. These four roots keep the tree standing until the time comes for it to die. If not for them, any small gust of wind could topple the tree.

In the same way, a man's life should have a point. That point is faith in God. Faith in God should be man's taproot. That faith must search for the wisdom that can understand God, this body, ourselves, those who are with us, this world, and our responsibility here. We need faith in order to know and understand our identity and our history. We need faith in order to know, "How should I conduct my life, and how should I proceed and progress on this path?" We need faith, certitude, determination, and effort—the certitude, determination, and effort that never give up, and the faith in God that never wavers, no matter what may come. These are the four roots we need to plant in our lives. If they are planted firmly, the mind will not waver as much. Then we can hold on to that one point.

Do not follow the ways of the mind, for just as the moon moves through the clouds in the sky, this mind drifts through the clouds of illusion, or *māyā.* The mind is floating on an ocean of *māyā,* continuously traveling through waves and whirlpools and vapors, through colors and hues and darknesses. Such is the movement of the mind. Like the moon, it travels through these clouds of illusion and darknesses, encountering many accidents in the ethers. Mind and desire, which operate in this world made of earth, fire, water, air, ether, and illusion, have no point of rest. The mind is uncontrollable. It is in a

state of chaos as it rocks on the waves of the ocean of *māyā* and is pushed by gusts of wind. It has no control. To halt these uncontrollable movements of the mind that mimic those of the moon, you need wisdom. Wisdom can absorb and control all these waves and energies *(sakthis).*

The moon's energy is visible only in proportion to the darkness—the darker the sky, the brighter the moon and the lighter the sky, the dimmer the moon. This is because it gains energy in darkness and loses that energy to the light. In a similar way, the mind operates directly in proportion to how dark the illusion is in which it dwells. Its state, its energies, its attachments, its jealousy, its revenge, its differences of race and religion, and other such thoughts all gain or lose energy based on this. As illusion grows darker and darker, the mind shows its energy more and more, just as the moon displays its full energy and light in total darkness. Within the darknesses of desire and the many thoughts operating within the qualities of earth, fire, water, and air, and the arrogance of 'I' and 'mine', the mind displays itself and its illusions most vigorously. It touts itself as the greatest, saying, "Look at me, nothing is greater than I am. See how cooling I am."

That is the mind. It is also very cooling, yet, like the moon, within it there is darkness. Even though you see the moon as a circle of perfectly even light, you can also see colors and crevices. Similarly, in the mind you can see the crack called the monkey mind. However much light the mind may appear to have, however beautiful it may look, and however much it declares, "See how cooling I am," there is a crack that displays the monkey mind as clearly as the crevices on the bright surface of the moon. This monkey roams everywhere, jumps up and down, and imitates whatever it sees. It is the nature of man's mind and his life to be like that. So they have to be controlled. But how can that be done? With wisdom, the wisdom of truth. What should that wisdom be like? Like the sun.

We need faith in God. Using that faith, we must imbibe the qualities of God, and with those qualities we must bring His actions into our actions, His conduct into our conduct, and His duty into our duty. We must make His actions and His duties our own. Therefore, we must have patience, inner patience *(sabūr),* and contentment *(shakūr).* We must give all praise to God *(al-hamdu lillāh),*

and hand over all responsibility to Him *(tawakkul-'alallāh).* In this state, we surrender all responsibility to God. For what is going to happen in the next moment, we must have *tawakkul,* saying, "It is Your duty, O God. Whatever You do is right." For what is happening at this moment, we must say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh.* All praise is to You. O God! What You have done is correct. What I have done is incorrect. All that You do is perfect, and all that I do is imperfect. All praise is to You, O God! You act knowing the situation, but I act without knowing. You are aware, You have scrutinized everything before You act. I act in ignorance, without understanding, without knowing. Only what You do is right. *Al-hamdu lillāh."*

This is the state we need to attain. Once this state develops within someone, he becomes the child of God. He is the son of God. He will no longer be the moon. He will be the *sun* as well as being the *son.* When you become the sun, wisdom will resplend as light within you, and when that resplendence comes into you, the moon within you will lose its energy and beauty. Its colors will fade, the clouds covering it will disappear, and the monkey will go. At that point, only the effulgence of the sun will resplend. The moon (the mind) will still be there, but it will have lost its energy.

Just as the moon loses its energy as soon as the sun comes, the mind loses its energies as soon as wisdom resplends. All the energies stop—the energies of the waves, of the glitters, and of all movement. They remain where they were but lose their strength, their force, their color, and their hues. Only their outline or outer form is left. Those mind energies can only function in darkness.

A person who becomes a true human being becomes the sun. To become the sun, you must obtain the wisdom of God's qualities, and when they resplend within you, all the energies disappear and the darkness goes. For this to happen you need to have faith and give all responsibility to God for whatever may follow. You also need wisdom. So if you can search for *'ilm,* the wisdom of divine knowledge, and make it resplend within you, the darkness of the mind will be dispelled. As soon as that darkness goes, all the intentions and thoughts of the mind will lose their energy. Once their energy is gone, you will be able to discriminate between right and wrong, truth and falsehood. And when you come to understand the truth, you will understand yourself. If you understand yourself and know

who you are, at that point you will know God.

You need to search for this state. If you can establish the taproot of faith correctly and search for the wisdom of truth—the benefit of that will be apparent in your life. Then your life will be a true life.

When you go on a journey, do not hold on to a dog. A dog will drag you everywhere. It does not appreciate good things. It likes feces, bones, and decayed, smelly, dead things, and it will drag you toward such things. It will drag you all over, and this will be troublesome for you. You will grow tired, but the dog is strong and will never tire. Therefore, don't take the dog of desire along with you when you go on a journey. The one to tire will not be the dog, it will be you. So if you take a walk for relaxation, don't exercise the dog at the same time. If you really want to relax, tie the dog up somewhere and just walk by yourself. That will be better.

Similarly, do not hold on to the tail of a water buffalo in order to cross a lake, for the buffalo will lie down in the mud when it reaches the middle of the lake, and you will drown. And do not hold on to the tail of a tiger in order to cross a jungle, for when it gets hungry, it will eat you up. Do not pack up the world and take it with you in order to go on a search for God. Don't take even a package of rice or a mat with you, because they will grow heavy. Even a handful of rice will weigh you down. As you go further along the path, these things will grow heavier and heavier. So, when you go searching for truth or intending God, cast off all these burdens and say, *"Al-hamdu lillāh!* All praise is to God!"

Just as you made your trip from France to here, make your trip to God saying, *"Tawakkul-'alallāh.* I give all responsibility to You, O God." For that you need wisdom and faith.

Wisdom is the light for your life, faith is the path, God is the truth, and understanding this is peace. If you realize this and surrender yourself, you will become the effulgence. Then there will be no future birth. Understand this and conduct yourself accordingly.

QUESTION: May I ask a question about my mother's health?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Have you visited your mother?

QUESTIONER: No, I'll see her tomorrow.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Go visit her, then come and ask.

Desire is an illness. Attachment is an illness. Blood ties are an illness. Wealth is an illness. Love for earth is an illness. *Māyā* (illusion) is an illness. Love for gold and wealth are illnesses. Life itself is an illness. There are so many grave illnesses like that. So, first go see which illness is afflicting your mother, then we will talk about it.

QUESTION: A few of us have been thinking about sharing a house. What does Bawa think about that idea?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You still haven't become God. When there are too many rats gathered in the same place, they will fail to block their hole to keep the rat-catcher from seeing them. Each rat will think the other rat is going to block the hole, so the rat hole will stay open, and all the rats will be caught. In the same way, each of you might think, "This one will wash the plates, that one will sweep, and the other one will lock the gate." It could happen that way, and in the end you will have trouble. There is a saying that if three women get together and live in the same place, you will get ninety-three problems, and only God can fix such problems. On the other hand, if you live alone, even a rat's burrow will be sufficient for you.

If the three of you decide to get a house, you should have three apartments: one on the first floor, one on the second, and one on the third. Then each of you can go about your duty.

TRANSLATOR: Are there separate floors?

QUESTIONER: Well, the sleeping quarters are separate, but we would be sharing the same kitchen and the same living room.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: That is the problem. That is where the rats will not be able to block the hole. At present, while you each live in your own place, you are friends. When each rat lives in its own hole, you can remain friends, but when you get together and all live in the same place, the friendship could be broken. Therefore, each of you should keep your own burrow and let your friendship stay the way it is. Let your love be as it is now. What else?

QUESTIONER: This is kind of personal, but we have to ask because we can't be here any other time. My wife had a lot of problems in her last pregnancy, so I don't think it is wise for us to have another child.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: You may have your desires, and you may have a child. That is all right. But to raise each child in a just manner, the father and mother must control their mind and desire until the child is five years old, until he is at the age where he can do things for himself without having to ask them for help. Until then they must control themselves. That is the correct way. If you fail to do that and those desires are within you, then each time you touch your child, those desires go into the child as taints and blemishes, which will retard his development. The good state of the child will waste away, his growth will be slowed, he might lose weight, and he could even develop vomiting disorders.

If you follow this advice, then by the time the second child is born and needs protection, the first child will be six years old and will have learned to look after himself. Also, the mother will have recovered her physical strength during those five years. When the children are born too close to each other, their intelligence, wisdom, and brain power are diminished. Even though the children may appear chubby, their bodies are not as strong, and under certain circumstances they will encounter difficulties. But if you can maintain this control for five years, then a similar quality of controlling these qualities and desires will develop in your child, too.

You will not get angry at what I say, will you?

QUESTIONER: No!

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Look at a cow. It does not have discriminative wisdom. Over three or four years, the cow spends only five minutes on sex, only five minutes involved in this illusion. Once it becomes pregnant and bears a calf, it spends all its time feeding the calf milk and looking after it. Until the calf has grown, the cow does not allow a bull to approach her. So in three or four years, she spends only two and a half, or three, or five minutes on sex. Once she becomes pregnant, the cow will kick and butt any bull that tries to come near. This is the behavior of a mere cow.

If the cow lives for fifty years, how many minutes of its life does it spend on illusion? If it spends only five minutes every three years, that is just seventy-five minutes, that's all. In all its fifty years of life, it spends only seventy-five minutes on sex. But look at a human being. This is the creation endowed with discrimination, with divine analytic wisdom. If we are true human beings, how much time should we spend on sex? The cow, who is an animal with no wisdom, spends only seventy-five minutes of its entire life on sex. So we who are human beings, if for three minutes we see once again the place we emerged from, and if we realize its state, that should be enough for us.

This is written in a book called *Maya Veeram* or *The Forces of Illusion*. In that book a certain riddle is posed: "What is it that you saw before and want to see again?" You saw it once as you were coming out, and having come out, what is it you want to see again? If this desire comes into you, you should understand within three minutes what is involved. If you understand this, then you are a true man. Man should understand within three minutes that this is hell, a dark prison of hell. He must realize that he was inside that dark prison and came into the world through that hell. And whenever he thinks of that place, he needs to realize it is the same hell and he should never return to it again.

A true man, a man of wisdom, will realize within three minutes of the sexual act that it is hell. He would not need another experience. Having seen it when he first came out would be enough. He would realize that these currents are trying to grab him, these demons are trying to destroy him, and they will cut him up, dump him into the fire of hell, and eat him. A man of wisdom would have realized this when he emerged from there and would not waste time reentering.

Desire is not a good thing, even if it is desire for God. Control is good. If you reflect on this with wisdom, it will be good. Our own eyes are our sores. They make us blind. Our desires are the flaming fires that burn us. Our mind is the current of illusion that drags us here and there. The joys of our body will be the firewood for hell. Our beauty will be the make-up for the ghosts in hell. Reflect on this and control your desires little by little. That will be good. It certainly is difficult to control one's desires before wisdom dawns,

but as wisdom grows, realization will come. All right. Until your mind is subdued, go slowly.

QUESTION: If being born is such a hell, is it right to bring a child into the world? Would it be right to consider not bringing a child into the world?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Drop one seed, let it grow, and see what happens. But make it a good seed; make it a seed that can benefit everybody. If you can plant a tree that will benefit everyone and give shade to many people, then it may give nourishment. If it is a good seed that will be of benefit, then it is all right.

QUESTION: How can you make sure it will be that kind of seed?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: We must turn into that seed.

QUESTIONER: My only wish is to die.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: That is not a thing within your control. Your life does not belong to you, it belongs to God. So how can you choose that? He will take care of it. It is the 'I' that should die, not you. The feeling of 'I' (the ego) must die, and you should have eternal life.

QUESTION: I have to leave rather soon, and I would like to purchase one of these posters, "The 99 Names of Allah." Could Bawa propose any of the other posters of his paintings which might be especially good?[1]

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: The poster of "The Tree of the Prophets."

When I was coming to this world from over there, I was asked, "What will you do?" There was a dispute between me and my Bridegroom. God, who is my Father is also my Bridegroom. When I surrender to Him, He is God, my Father; when I love Him, He is my Bridegroom. Whenever I have love for Him, He is like my Bridegroom, my Beloved. Whenever I surrender to Him, He is God. In

1. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen illustrated the Sufi path in a number of mystical paintings, seven of which have been reproduced.

this circumstance, I had love for Him, therefore He was my Beloved.

I made a promise at that time. "I love only You. All my justice, all my virtue, and my chastity depend entirely on You. If my chastity goes it will be to You, not to anything in the world."

Then He asked me, "Do you really love Me? If you truly love Me, then you must go, and you must take with you what I give you."

I said I would go, and He placed these conditions on me: "You must become one with Me and have a child of Mine without joining with Me. That child must be like Me. His sound must be My sound; his voice must be My voice; his actions must be My actions; his behavior must be My behavior; his gaze, his beauty, and his face must all resemble Me. You must beget that child by becoming one with Me, without the two of us coming together.

"I will give you a flower. If you have the slightest feeling or desire or intention for another, that flower will fade and wither away. If it does, you will be subject to the punishment I give you. But if the flower does not fade, if you succeed in forming My child, and if you bring My child to Me, I will give My kingdom to you and to My children."

It is a long story, but when I left there I took this oath: "I will unite with You, I will mingle with You, and I will have Your child. I will bring that child with Your beauty and with all the signs You have asked for, and I will present him to You. I will fulfill that assignment and bring You such a child."

It is in accordance with this oath that I have come here to this world. So what is my business? To beget a child like Him, so that God's beauty dawns within that child, so that God's sound, His light, and His qualities are present in that child. I would beget a child like that by placing my love, my devotion, and my trust only in Him, without losing my virtue or chastity, without desiring anyone, and without being hypnotized by the world. I would join Him without His being aware of it, and I would hand the child over to Him.

That is what I must do. I have to fulfill this oath and take His child back to Him. No matter how many children of that nature I beget, I will go back and hand them over to Him. That is the oath I took. That is my only duty. All the other things you see me doing in this world are not a part of me, they do not belong to me. They are just my way of playing with you. That oath I made is the only

thing that is mine.

Have you ever seen a fool like me in this world? I doubt you have. Why? Look, there are so many wonderful things here for the taking: so much money and gold, so many nice clothes and glitters and jewels, so many titles, and so much fame. There are many, many beautiful things to gather. Everything you see is a show. But here you see a man who chooses to give up all these shows and indulge in this crazy work. Is he not a fool? The whole world is saying, "This fool comes here and sticks to the crazy business of fulfilling the oath he made. What a fool." You will not see anyone as foolish in this world. This is my job, the work of a fool.

One who disregards so much happiness, so much beauty, so many tasty foods, glitters, fame, titles, and possessions—one who disregards all this just for the sake of fulfilling an oath, is he not foolish? But this is my job. This is the reason I came. I have to go back to God with a child exactly like Him. A child like that must be born and must grow to be like God. Then I must take the child to God, show Him his beauty and ask, "Look, is this child Yours?" This is why I have spent so much time here. Do you understand?

A husband and wife must live like a flower and its fragrance. The fragrance and flower never separate. Until the flower fades and perishes, the fragrance remains in the flower, and as long as the fragrance is there, the flower is too. Until one dies, the other is part of it. This is how life should be. The beauty of the life of a husband and wife should be like the fragrance in a flower, with one never leaving the other. Much love. May God protect you.

Anyway, take whatever posters you like. It is impossible to put a value on these paintings. They were drawn with my own hand. Their value may be realized when I am no longer here. I am not speaking of a monetary value; the value is to be found within the pictures themselves.

The qualities of Allah, His actions, His conduct, His *wilāyāt*, the twenty-five chosen prophets, all the 124,000 prophets, their families, and the saints are all imprinted within those pictures. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Moses, David, Jesus, and Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of God be upon him and all of them); Jacob, Idris, Job, Jonah, Joseph, Isaac, and Solomon the son of David (may the peace of God be upon them too)—the names of all the prophets

are within those pictures. Even though it is only a picture we are looking at, it shows what should be in our hearts. If this picture comes into our hearts, then we will become son-God.

QUESTION: I want to know how to find wisdom and how to develop wisdom.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: There are seven levels of wisdom, or consciousness: feeling, awareness, intellect, judgment, subtle wisdom, divine analytic wisdom, and divine luminous wisdom. Using this wisdom, we churn deeper and deeper, increasing our understanding.

For example, take a piece of fruit. We recognize the taste in a fruit, don't we? When we bite into it, we know whether it has a good taste or a bad taste, don't we? We understand that immediately. This understanding is based on our intellect, but we can go further in our understanding: How did this taste come about? What is the name of this fruit? What soil did this fruit grow on? What were the energies in that soil? Was the fruit from an original seed or was it grafted? Analyzing such points and understanding the results of the analysis is done by our fifth level, subtle wisdom.

The next level is divine analytic wisdom. At this level, we realize that within a tiny seed is contained a large tree with many leaves, many flowers, and countless fruits. The unripe fruits came from the flowers and were once green like the leaves. The tree came from the seed and bears the same nature as the seed. The bark of the tree is like the outer covering of the seed, and under the bark is the same white color that you find inside the seed. Just as a tiny point grows from within the seed, so flowers and fruits come forth. As the fruits ripen, they gain the same taste as the original fruit the seed came from. And just as a tree sheds its bark, we peel off the skin of the fruit and discard it. By discarding the seed casing, by destroying its old form, a new form emerges—another tree. This tree takes a new form, then it grows a fruit, and within the fruit the original seed grows again. Thus, a single tree that grows from a single seed goes on to create a vast number of seeds, and within each of those seeds the form of that tree is created over again.

So now it is necessary to eat the fruit and analyze it: Is it ripe? Is

it good? Is it bitter? Is it sour? Is it sweet? I taste the fruit and say, "This is a nice taste," or "This is sour," or "This is not good." The wisdom that churns and sifts inside, revealing all these answers and defining the taste, is divine analytic wisdom. The next level is divine luminous wisdom, which says, "This taste is good. It is good and there is a use for it."

In the same way, we must understand our self and our entire life, from the original seed to the final seed. We must churn ourselves and throw away the outer coverings that grew in this world of ignorance. Then the point of God will grow. What we were originally will sprout again, and from that, His millions of miracles, His qualities, and His light will grow. All the colors will leave and His explanation will return. To understand this state is true wisdom and light. Do you understand? Is that right?

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

QUESTION: Can Bawa speak about marriage?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: Marriage is a state in which the two join together in perfect unity, unwavering, without the slightest doubt, one heart embracing the other.

If your mind is going up and down before the marriage, how are you going to conduct a married life? It should not be like that. First of all, both of you must lay the foundation correctly. The fish hook, the bait, and the fish must all be suited to each other, for only then can we catch the fish we want. If the hook is not the right one for the fish you are trying to catch, it will fall out before you pull the line in halfway. Not only will the fish get away, but it will take the bait with it, so you will lose that too. In the same way, when two lives and two hearts have merged, you must drop in the hook called love. That is the best way. Only when you have brought your minds to that unwavering state and your two points have become one, can you have a true married life.

Similarly, even though two wires, the earth-wire and the current-wire, are separate, once they are connected properly within a switch, there will be light. In the same way, even though you are two separate bodies and have two separate minds, you must unite these within

the switch of the heart. Only then will the light of life glow. Otherwise, it will not light up. You must reflect on this.

If you can create this state correctly, then get married. That will be best. But if your mind wavers up and down while you are reeling in the fish, then halfway through, the fish will fall back into the water carrying your bait with it.

Your happiness is my happiness. Your life is my life. Your suffering is my suffering, and your joy is my joy. If the two of you are properly suited, then my heart feels it to be a proper marriage. Then I will be happy with this marriage. Do you understand? You must rectify whatever doubts you have before you get married. Doubt and suspicion are the cancer of life. They are not at all good. Both of you must think about this. My love to you.

QUESTION: I am from Boston. I have never met Bawa before, but I had seen a poster once. I am here today because I had a dream about Bawa.

In the dream, a person who does not believe in any of this assigned me to Bawa. I work in a school system and it was one of the principals, the least likely of all the principals, who assigned me to Bawa. I looked at the word 'BAWA', and said, "What is that?" Then something said, "Well, it may be a *guru!*" So when I woke up, I looked in my spiritual community guidebook. I think Bawa was the only *guru* in the whole book that I had not circled or followed up on, so I called Philadelphia. I was wondering what it meant that in the dream she had assigned me to Bawa.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: What is it that you were seeking? Were you searching for *gurus* or for God?

QUESTIONER: God.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: (Bawa Muhaiyaddeen points to the painting of the *Bismin.*) This is my sign. This is what you were seeking. That book that you looked at might have had this sign. This is the symbol for Bawa.

God, Allah, *Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm,* He is the One who creates, protects, and redeems. He is the One who creates all lives,

gives them nourishment, protects them, and then summons them back. He summons His children back to His own state.

This is the symbol, and if this is what you need, then you need Bawa. The meaning of the dream is that if this is what you need, go to him. If you want a *guru,* go to other people. If you want the world and *gurus,* if you want illusion, or if you want the ability to perform miracles such as mimicking the actions of birds and fish, then go to all these *gurus.* Fish swim in water and birds fly in the sky, but when a man does such things, they call it a miracle. There are worms that live in fire, but if a man walks on fire, they call it a miracle.

Give up these things, and if you need God, then this is where you must go (pointing to the symbol). This is the point, the sign. It was shown to you, now take it. This is the meaning of your dream. The principal who came to show you was Maryam (رضي) (Mary, mother of Jesus (عم)).

QUESTION: Can Mary come in different guises? Because this person does not look like Mary.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: That was only a figure needed for the dream. It took a figure that you were familiar with, so you would accept what she said. But the message really came from Mary (رضي). You are familiar with the person in the dream. You have some love for her, and it was through that love that the message came.

QUESTIONER: That is really something! Thank you.

MICHAEL GREEN: I also have a question about plans to share a house.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If your kitchens were separate, that would be much better. My feeling is that if you do not have three separate units with separate kitchens, it could cause trouble later. You are only able to see what is happening now. I am able to see what can happen later. You single out only the good things you see now and forget what might happen in the future. I single out right now the things that are bound to happen later.

If I plan to build a lake or a pond, before starting, I will consider what could happen to it later. But you build a lake just because you

want to pump out the water right now. That is the difference. When one plans to build a lake, one needs to calculate how much it can hold, what river feeds into it, how much rain falls into that river, what is the greatest amount of water the rain might bring, whether the embankment surrounding this lake can retain that much water, and whether it is strong enough to bear that amount.

But you are in a big rush and declare, "Oh, I want a lake!" Then you build it with nothing but loose sand and the next thing you know, you'll see a river overflowing its edges in certain places and eating into the bund. Soon the whole lake inundates the village below.

What I would do is build the banks very firmly, provide a sluice to let out any excess water, and make sure that the lake bunds will not be damaged. This is the difference between your wisdom and mine.

Therefore, if each family lives on a separate floor, each will do their own job completely, by themselves. Then it will not matter. There are eighty-four thousand kinds of problems inside this Fellowship. Only if a man has the wisdom capable of tackling and adjusting all eighty-four thousand of these can he survive.

Michael, life is not like drawing pictures. Life is much deeper, much more intricate than what you think. You need to use wisdom. If you buy a plot of land and each of you builds a house there, that is a different matter. That is all right. Then you will be able to divide your land, share it out, and build your house or farm or whatever you like. That is a different matter altogether.

But if three or four of you get together to share a house, you must make sure that everything is going to be right. Your thought right now is that these three little children will play with each other and be happy together. Children are happy wherever they are with other children. The question is whether you, the parents, will be happy. There is a doubt as to whether the three wives, who are the mothers of these children, will live happily together, even if the husbands can manage. The problem is whether the wives will get along together. As for the children, don't worry about them. They can be happy wherever they are. The moment they see other children, they will be happy. Today you are thinking the children will play nicely together, but when they get a little bigger, one will pinch the other, and that one's mother will complain, "She pinched my child!"

Or one child might bite the other, and the mother will come rushing to tell the husband, "Her child bit my child." At that moment, you will not have the patience and tolerance of God. You will not be God. That means you lack the feeling and awareness that all three children are the children of the one God.

Michael Green, do you have that awareness?

MICHAEL: I'll try to have that awareness.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: I do not know when you are going to get to the end of your trying, but suppose all these calamities come before you do? What are you going to do then? Consider well before you act.

MICHAEL: Someone said that Bawa said if we could live in unity, it would be good, so we took the house to lease. What should we do now?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: I said, yes, if there were three apartments. If you can live in three different sections, then there will not be problems. I meant a house like that. If the three families are going to share one kitchen there are going to be problems. Your minds are not like God. You cannot see all beings as one. You still do not have the qualities of God or the patience of God. You lived in another such house earlier and what happened there? You left almost immediately.

We have to reflect a lot on these things. If you can figure out a way of living as separate units in the same house, you can carry on. I am telling you this from what I have experienced in the hearts of my children. Words are very easy, but to follow them with actions is very difficult. The lease is signed already? (Yes.) Did you rent or buy? (Rent.) All right, go and try it and see. See how it goes. We will know later on. If the things I talked about don't come to pass, that means you have developed wisdom. If they do happen, that means you have no wisdom.

Since you have already finalized these things, go there and see what happens.

August 20, 1979

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Session 20

A'ūdhu billāhi minash-shaitānir-rajīm. I seek refuge in Allah from the evils of satan, the rejected. *Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm.* In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, the One of limitless grace and incomparable love, that *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* who is supreme, may He bestow the wealth of His grace and His compassion on us. *Āmīn.* May He grace us with His qualities, His actions, and His conduct. May His benevolence be ours. *Āmīn.* May He forgive our sins. May He give us a long life, a life free of illness. *Āmīn.* May He grace us with unlimited wealth and bliss. May He give us peace and tranquillity in our lives. May He bestow upon us the state of showing compassion to all lives. May He give all of us the fullness of heart by which we can feel the illnesses of others as our own. *Āmīn.* May He favor us with His benign gaze of compassion and mercy, which will never forsake us in this world or in the hereafter.

Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm. My precious jeweled lights, gems of my eyes, my own children who are born as life within my life, children of my life, I give you my greetings and my love. My precious jeweled lights, have you any questions to ask?

QUESTION: What is meant by *Allāhu?*

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: In each of our innermost hearts *(qalbs)* there is a sound which goes on resonating with the sound: *hū, hū, hū, hū,* a resonance that never diminishes no matter how much we take from it. It is that resonance that is *Allāhu.* Mingling with the soul, it goes on resonating: *hū, hū, hū.* Mingling with wisdom, it goes on resonating: *hū, hū, hū.* Mingling with the blood, skin, and tissues, it strikes the note: *haqq, haqq, haqq.* Feel your pulse and see. You will feel it going: *haqq, haqq, haqq.* And everything that is flowing gives forth the sound: *hū, hū, hū.* It is that resonance that is called *Allāhu.* That benevolence, that fullness of plenitude, which

does not diminish by even an iota, no matter how much our hearts take from it, is what is called *Allāhu.*

All trees, shrubs, flowers—all bow in obeisance to that *hū.* Even the blades of grass, trees, branches, and leaves sway in tune to *lā ilāha* (There is none worthy of worship other than You) and then bend forward to affirm *illallāhu* (You alone are God). There is nothing other than You. Fruits too sway from side to side before they fall. Birds, as soon as they wake up, look to one side and then to the other, and then drop their heads in obeisance. That to which every creation bows its head in obeisance is *Allāhu.* To turn our hearts toward Him and bow our heads to Him is what is pleasing to Him.

It is that resonance, that Power, that is called *Allāhu.* That Power is limitless grace and incomparable love, and it is to that grace, that love, that plenitude, that we bow our heads in worshipful obeisance.

My precious children, jeweled lights of my eye! Are there any other questions?

QUESTION: If one knows what is right and tries to do what is right, but still makes mistakes, what must he do?

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: If you have committed a fault and realize it to be a fault, you must ask forgiveness from God. Immediately you will be forgiven. Once it is forgiven, the two angels,[1] one on either shoulder, who write down all you do will erase the fault you have committed. Then you must try never to repeat it. It is your responsibility not to commit that fault again. If you fulfill that responsibility, it will make your life exalted. In every situation you face, you need to realize any mistake you make, see it as a fault, and then avoid repeating it.

Any other questions my children?

QUESTION: Can Bawa explain the true meaning of *Ramadān* (the Islamic month of fasting) and the revelations that came to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ? And what is the relationship between the two?

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1. Raqīb and ʿAtīd ﷺ (A) The two recording angels, on your right and left shoulders. One writes down the good actions of the person and the other the bad.

BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN: When His creations came into this world, *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* (Almighty God), who is the Benevolence for all the worlds *(Rahmatul-'ālamīn),* gave His benevolence to each. First He created the world, and then He provided the food, or *rizq,* for each creation. This food can be found in the trees, the flowers, in water, in air, in the earth, and in many other places. Seventy thousand years before He sent each creation into the world, *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* created the food for that creation. So, man comes here knowing that his food and water have already been provided for him. Everything he needs can be found here, and it is his job to take what is portioned out for him. He must understand which food is permissible *(halāl)* and which is impermissible *(harām)* and eat only the food that was meant just for him. Anything he covets or steals from others is impermissible.

Within each of His creations *Allāhu ta'ālā* has placed the ability to understand what is *halāl* and what is *harām.* He established laws regarding this and decreed that no one should obtain his food by deceiving another or plundering and stealing from another. We are all equal when we come into this world. No one comes rich or poor. *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* provided the food, the *rizq,* of His benevolence in equal measure for all. But satan's qualities and thoughts of pride, treachery, and deceit caused people to grab the food of others and thus eat what was *harām.* Due to this plundering, some became poor and others became rich.

Then, because this state had developed, *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* sent His words of grace to the *Rasūl* (ﷺ). He established the *qurbān,* the acceptable way of slaughtering animals for food. In those times people would subject animals to a lot of suffering when they slaughtered them. They would kill the animal in any way they fancied—strangle them, beat them with a stick or a club, beat them to death on a tree trunk, or cut their throats with chopping knives. They would inflict a lot of pain in killing them and would kill as many animals as they liked, whenever they liked. In every single home they would take the lives of animals any time of day or night. They slaughtered animals as well as birds such as chickens, cranes, and ostriches. They would catch a chicken in the night, when it was sleeping or when it was glorifying Allah, and kill it and cook its flesh. They would drag cattle off, right in the middle of grazing, and kill them.

Because of the torment people were inflicting on animals and birds, *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* sent down the commandment regarding *qurbān: "Yā* Muhammad! Tell this to your followers! 'Before you kill an animal to eat it, you must understand the meaning of *halāl* and *harām* (permissible and prohibited). You must kill only the animals that belong to you. If you steal or plunder animals belonging to others, that meat will be *harām* for you, it will never be *halāl.' Yā* Muhammad! If people want to eat the flesh of an animal, it must be killed in the prescribed manner and this must be done by someone who performs the five times prayer every day, such as the *mu'adhdhin* or *lebbe.*[2] The person who kills it must be looking at its face, no matter what animal it is. Then the knife must be positioned on its neck and the *Subhānallāhi Kalimah* must be recited before cutting. The neck must be severed within three strokes. During this process the knife should not strike the bone. The animal must not cry out or regurgitate its food. If it does, that flesh is *harām.* And if you cut the animal again, that too is *harām."*

There are also stipulations about the size of the knife that must be used—so many inches of blade and so many inches of handle for a chicken, and different sizes for a camel or a cow or bull or goat. In this way, conditions were dictated appropriate to each animal.

Why were these conditions decreed in the first place? Earlier the Prophet ﷺ had told the people it was a sin to kill, to take a life. So what did they do? In order to avoid actual killing, they would go by night and cut off the front leg or hind leg of a camel or a goat and cook and eat the flesh. Although they did not kill the animal outright it would be dead by morning. Then the owner of the animal would complain to the Prophet ﷺ that their animal had lost a limb and died.

The *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ told them that this practice was *harām*, and that what they did had caused the death of the animal. He told them to reflect upon how they would suffer if one of their own limbs was cut off, and that if they did this to an animal, not only was it *harām,*

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2. *mu'adhdhin* (A) The one who summons the people by reciting the call to prayer *(adhān).*

lebbe (Urdu) A term used in South India and Sri Lanka for a person who performs similar duties in the mosque.

but they had caused it agony and suffering and would be subject to Allah's grievous punishment. Soon the house to house killing of animals was stopped, and the practice of performing *qurbān* only at the mosque was instituted.

Thus the number of animals that could be slaughtered was reduced even further, because of the *mu'adhdhin's* schedule and duties. After finishing the *subh* (morning) prayers, the *mu'adhdhin* had to clean up the mosque, dust the prayer mats, and fill the ablution tank with water. Then he would have breakfast. By then it was 9:00 A.M. Now, whenever he performed the *qurbān* according to the instruction given by the *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ, he had to give water to the animal, then sprinkle water on it and recite the *kalimah.* Next the animal had to be positioned so that it looked toward the *qiblah.*[3] One person had to hold the animal's legs down while the other held its head and cut its neck. These things had to be done only by people who prayed five times a day. All these conditions had to be met during the *qurbān.* After the neck was cut, the knife had to be dropped to the ground. Then both people had to recite the *dhikr* while looking at the animal's face, until the soul finally left the animal's body. Then the knife had to be washed, while reciting the *kalimah.* Throughout the whole procedure, they had to perform *dhikr* to Allah. All this had to be completed before they could start on the next animal.

Only if they observed every one of these conditions would that meat be *halāl.* If even one step were omitted, the meat would be *harām.* This is what the *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ told them.

Prior to the institution of *qurbān,* there was indiscriminate slaughter of animals—a thousand or even ten thousand a day were slaughtered, a hundred thousand on special occasions. But performing *qurbān* correctly would take fifteen to twenty minutes for each animal. By noon the *mu'adhdhin* would not have killed any more then ten animals. Then he would have to stop in order to give the call for the *zuhr* (noontime) prayer. After prayers he would go for lunch. Since there was only a short time between *zuhr* and *'asr* (mid-afternoon) prayers, he might be able to deal with ten more animals at the most, making twenty in all for the day. Dusk came soon after

3. *qiblah* (A) Lit. The direction one faces in prayer. Muslims face toward the *Ka'bah* in Mecca. The inner meaning of the *qiblah* is the throne of God within the heart.

'asr, and *qurbān* could not be performed after dusk or in the nighttime. Thus the number of animals that could be slaughtered in a day was drastically reduced.

Because of this, the companions of the *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ complained that at this rate they would not have enough *halāl* meat to go around on festival days or other celebrations or days of rejoicing. Then *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* sent down words of grace to His *Rasūl* ﷺ to tell the people that instead of killing forty chickens, they could kill one goat and then share the meat. Instead of killing forty goats, they could kill three bulls and share the meat. If they were going to kill forty bulls or one hundred goats, they could slaughter ten camels instead and share the meat. If they did it this way the people would be satisfied.

Just as these commands were sent down to the *Rasūl* ﷺ to prevent the torture and random killing of animals, *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* sent down other commands to deal with different situations.

Why was fasting ordained? A human being needs to believe that his body, his possessions, and his soul all belong to Allah. Everything belongs to Allah. *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* sent down the *kalimah,* in which He says: First, have certitude of faith in Allah and with that certitude pray to Him and trust in Him alone. Believe firmly, without the slightest doubt, that He alone is worthy of worship, and turn your *qalb,* your innermost heart, in the direction of the *qiblah.* Allah is the light, and His grace and qualities are the *qiblah.* He is the *Badushāh* (Emperor) for that *qiblah.* And since He is the *Imām,* the leader of the prayers for that place, turn toward Him. Worship only Him. Thus the first thing is to accept Him and follow Him.

The second thing is to worship Him. This world *(dunyā)* and the hereafter *(ākhirah)* belong to Him. Everything is His property, therefore be aware that you do not own anything. The world is not your property. Even what you earn is not your property, it is merely what He has distributed among all of you. But you are holding on to that common property and claiming it as your own. This thought is *harām* and the desire for it is *harām.*

Allah said, "*Yā* Muhammad! Explain this to your followers. They do not realize that everything belongs to Me. They keep on shouting, 'My property! My house! My wealth!' and so on. As a result, they are hurting and tormenting others. They covet and plunder the be-

longings of others. They lend money for interest. They are doing many cruel things like this. They must not harm My devotees and My slaves. I have appointed a Day of Reckoning called *Qiyāmah.* On that day I will raise all of them up and will cause them to suffer in proportion to whatever pain or suffering they have inflicted on others. *Yā* Muhammad! Tell them that they will be made to endure the same pain they caused others."

God continues, "Tell them that I have ordained five and six obligatory duties *(furūd).* The five are outer duties and the six are inner. Of the five, the first is to accept Me. The second is to worship Me. The third is to give charity, or *sadaqah.* And what is charity? Because of their state of ignorance, because of the lack of light in their hearts, people have failed to accept Me with certitude and instead made the world their own. They do not realize that it is I who created the nourishment that is permissible for them. Anyone who claims the world as his own, anyone who grabs the world and says it belongs to him, has changed into satan and is surely going to hell. It is for such people that I created hell. They have seven kinds of base desires, and these seven will constitute the fire that burns them in the seven hells. All the things they cherished in the world will turn into scorpions, spiders, snakes, centipedes, dogs, foxes, lions, tigers, and tarantulas—each with seventy thousand kinds of poison. Whatever qualities such persons had, each quality will generate seventy thousand kinds of poisons within them, causing unending torment. Whatever scheming, trickery, deceit, and treachery a person practiced, intending to torment and ruin others, each of these will turn into seventy thousand kinds of poison that will afflict him. I have made each one of those qualities into a scorpion with seventy thousand stings and each sting has seventy thousand poisons. Therefore they cannot escape from a suffering that is many times worse than what they intended for others.

"Tell them this, *Yā* Muhammad. I have created food that is *halāl* for each person, and it is there for him to take. Tell him to search for it and find it. I have given the food appropriate for every bird and animal, and I have also apportioned that which is permissible for mankind. Not realizing this, man goes after the world and grabs what belongs to others. So he must now give it back as charity to those who are in need.

But since man has forgotten these first three duties, Allah sent down a fourth, which is fasting. This is called *Ramadān.* The hunger that one feels when fasting is meant to help him realize the hunger that torments others more needy than himself. When he feels how his body shrivels, how much he suffers when he is hungry, how his desires increase and his body suffers—then he comes to realize what older people and children and others are suffering."

But even with this, some people's faith still did not become steadfast, and they did not learn what they were meant to learn. Even though they fasted from dawn to sunset, after they broke their fast they would gorge themselves and continue to eat to their fill until dawn. Therefore *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* said, "During these days of *Ramadān,* at least on Fridays, before the *khutbah* (the sermon given at the midday prayer) tell them to give offerings to the poor. Tell them to give some of the wealth they have accumulated. If they do not do this, tell them to give presents and charity to the poor at least on the twenty-seventh day of the fast." But they did not follow even this.

Then *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* said, "These people are not moving out of the darkness that fills their hearts. Therefore, tell them, *Yā* Muhammad, once again, to distribute at least ten percent of their wealth to the poor. There is a thing called death that governs them, and there is also a Day of Judgment. Remind them that on the day of their death they will have to leave everything behind." But they did not accept this either.

So Allah sent down His next obligatory duty. He said, "*Yā* Muhammad, the *hajj,* the holy pilgrimage to Mecca, is an obligatory duty. Tell them that they must fulfill this at least once in their lifetime. Tell them it is their duty to complete this perfectly. In order to do so, before they leave on *hajj* they must give whatever is due as dowry to the wife and what is due as inheritance to each of the children. Whatever is left they must give as charity and presents to the poor and the needy. Then they must go unencumbered, wearing a white cloth *(kafan),* as a corpse would be dressed, and in this state complete the fifth duty. To fulfill the *hajj,* they must be dead to the world. They must make the world in them die.

These five duties are the essential obligatory duties of Islam. God has declared that these duties must be fulfilled for *Īmān-Islām.* If we

complete these five satisfactorily then we can celebrate *'Īdul-Fitr,* the day of rejoicing at the end of the month of fasting.

We need to understand the significance of these duties during *Ramadān,* the month of fasting. Some people, however, avoid the duty of fasting and in its place give a measure of rice to the needy. Some just give clothes and presents. Some rich people pay others to fast on their behalf. There are also those who, instead of doing the pilgrimage themselves, pay for someone else to go, carrying the rich person's staff to represent him. In this way, rich people attempt to buy something that cannot be bought.

What we have to realize is that the whole purpose of the fast and the holy pilgrimage is to help us realize the difficulties and suffering of other lives. We need to see how we have wrongly claimed as our own the wealth that belongs to *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan.* We should understand this and give all responsibility to Him, saying *tawakkul-'alallāh, al-hamdu lillāh.* This is the true purpose of the fast, charity, and *hajj*—to hand over all responsibility to Allah and die—to make our desires die and the world in us die. This is the duty ordained for us. If we understand this, if we realize the true meaning of this fast, we will not hold on to anything for ourselves. We will not keep anything except Allah. Allah alone will be our property. His qualities will be our treasures. His actions will be our conduct. We will like whatever He likes, and we will seek whatever He seeks.

It is in this state that we must fulfill the five obligatory duties *(furūd)* and the six inner principles. If we accept that this is correct, we will have nothing to call our own—no property or wealth—and therefore we will have nothing to give in charity. A person with no wealth does not have to perform the *hajj,* but those with wealth are required to. Those who have wealth must give in charity. Those who have wealth must fast. They must perform all these obligatory duties. But one who is poor, a *miskīn,* has no food to eat, no clothes to wear, no strength to walk, and no house to live in. So how can he fast? Allah alone is his fast. His intention is his fast. His yearning is his fast. His fast is to never be separate from *Allāhu ta'ālā.* His constant thought of *Allāhu ta'ālā* is his fast. He glorifies Allah constantly. That is his fast. He surrenders himself to Allah. That is his fast. And for him, to die in Allah is the fulfillment of the five *furūd* (obligatory duties).

We must follow the four steps: *sharī'at, tarīqat, haqīqat,* and *ma'rifat.*[4] As long as we live in the world we must follow these steps. As long as we desire the things of the world we must follow these steps. If we covet or plunder the property of others, we must give in charity. If we have gathered things that are *harām,* we must give them away completely. If we have earned money by hurting someone else, or by underpayment of wages, that stays with us as *harām.* Anything we acquire by telling lies and deceiving others is *harām.* Anyone who imbibes such *harām* things will lose his *īmān* (faith, certitude, and determination) and his protection. On the other hand *īmān* and protection will be with one who imbibes only *halāl* things. *Īmān* will resplend in his heart. His life will be protected and peace will shine in his face.

Therefore, we must be in *Īmān-Islām,* those who with perfect trust accept *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan's* commands and His words of grace. When we say *Īmān-Islām,* we mean that *īmān* is Islam. All of everything, in fact, is Islam. *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* has said, "*Yā* Muhammad! If not for you I would not have created anything." Therefore everything is Islam. Everything has been formed out of the five letters *alif, lām, mīm, hā',* and *dāl.*[5] Without the *mīm* no form could have been created. It was by connecting the *alif* with the *mīm* that all of creation was created. Understanding this is to know the *sirr,* or secret, and the *sifāt,* or manifestation. The *rūh,* the soul, which came from *Allāhu ta'ālā,* is His essence, or *dhāt.* We must understand that essence and the creations. We must know what is good and what is bad. Dwelling within us are the things that belong to earth and also things that belong to Allah. The section that belongs to Allah is the good *(khair),* while the section of earth is the bad *(sharr).* We need to understand these. *Khair* is the beneficial part, while *sharr* is the creation, the part that appears as forms. If we can understand the

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4. *sharī'at, tarīqat, haqīqat,* and *ma'rifat* (A) The four steps of spiritual ascendance. See Glossary.

5. *alif, lām, mīm, hā', dāl* (A) Five Arabic letters. In the transformed man of wisdom, these letters are represented as: *alif*—Allah; *lām*—*Nūr,* the light of wisdom; *mīm*—Muhammad. *Hā'* and *dāl* correspond to the body of five elements (earth, fire, water, air, and ether), to the *sirr* (secret) and the *sifāt* (manifestations of creations), and to mind and desire.

difference between these two, then we will know how we must worship and pray to *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan.*

Allah did not reveal all 6,666 verses of the Qur'an at the same time. Whenever someone committed some evil, the *Rasūlullāh* ﷺ would ask God, who would then send down a verse to address that issue. In this way, one after another, the verses were revealed, each more precious and valuable than the one before, each giving deeper inner meanings. It is very difficult to know the true meaning of the Qur'an. To do so we need faith, certitude, determination, and wisdom. The meaning of the Qur'an will be revealed to people of wisdom. They must be people who have realized all four states: *sharī'at, tarīqat, haqīqat,* and *ma'rifat. Sharī'at* relates to the state of man's birth. *Tarīqat* is the state in which his faith, or *īmān,* begins to be established and he begins to understand. *Haqīqat* is the state in which he has love for God. And *ma'rifat* is the state in which, without duality, he merges in Allah and disappears in Him, worshiping Him in a state of oneness.

These four are present as four parts within one's own body. *Sharī'at* relates to the place of creation, the place we are born from. *Tarīqat* is the region of the stomach, the place of the fire of hunger. *Haqīqat* is the chest, the place in which we become close to God and embrace Him in our hearts. *Ma'rifat* is the entire region above the neck. Here we understand the seven principles[6] and merge with God, surrendering entirely to Him. Only after this can we really pray to God. Understanding both day and night, we must realize that the *Sūratul-Fātihah,* which is the inner form of man, consists of all four states. We must realize that inner form. We must realize that man has to transcend those four steps.

Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan sent us not only the verses of the Qur'an but also the reason for each one. Just as He sent each verse step by step, we must learn each of them step by step by step and thereby climb higher in wisdom. As we keep climbing upward, we need to discard thought after thought after thought. We need to cut away

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6. Seven principles: The seven faculties—two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and the mouth. These also relate to the seven levels of wisdom in man and the seven diacritical marks in the Arabic language, which give sound to the letters of the Qur'an.

every one of our desires. We need to go beyond each period in our life. Finally we must come to the ultimate ending, in which we say, *"Allāhu!"* At this stage, when we resonate, *"Allāhu!"* we will be one with Him. That is His grace, His *rahmat.* Unless we attain that state, our life will end in this world called *dunyā.* We will perish in the same place from which we appeared. Whatever nourished us is what we will die in. What we nourished is what will turn us into insects and worms and make us subject to hell.

We must understand all this. To understand it is fasting, *hajj,* and *īmān.* Only when one grows and understands this state can he be said to be in *Īmān-Islām. Īmān* is Islam. *Īmān* is perfect purity. Islam is resplendent light. Only when the light resplends in purity can it be called *Īmān-Islām.* It is true that everything is Islam, but it is only when *īmān* grows and its light resplends within the heart that Islam can be said to be complete. Only then can one be called a *mu'min,* or one of true faith. Those who are *mu'mins* are blessed to meet and commune with *Allāhu ta'ālā.*

The one whose heart totally accepts Allah, the one whose heart becomes resplendent and luminous, the one whose heart becomes perfectly pure—the purity of such a one is called *Īmān-Islām.* The resplendence of the innermost heart worshiping Allah without regarding anything as equal to Him is called *Īmān-Islām.* To accept Allah without the slightest doubt or reservation is *Īmān-Islām.*

All children of Adam (as) are *Īmān-Islām.* But if the hearts of the children of Adam (as) do not totally accept *Allāhu ta'ālā,* if they do not perfect their *īmān,* if they do not transform their qualities, if they still contain the qualities of satan and the qualities of demons, such as selfishness and sucking the blood of others, they will belong to the faction of satan. It is those qualities of satan that are called *kufr,* or ungrateful to God. God did not create Adam (as) as *kufr.* All the children of Adam (as) who have accepted Allah are said to be *Īmān-Islām.* That is what they are called in the Arabic language. In other languages they may be called pure ones, or those who have accepted God. Those who are pure, those who have accepted God, those whose hearts are pure are the ones who have *īmān,* or absolute faith. Those whose hearts are filled with light, those who have a heart that is luminous and accepts Allah totally, are said to be *Īmān-Islām.* All those who have *īmān* have accepted Allah fully.

Each one of us must understand this. We are not divided. We all belong to one race, not to different races. We belong to one family, not families divided by color differences. This is the gracious word of Allah.

We must understand this and transform our hearts, fill them with light, make our *īmān* steadfast, and glorify Allah. Whenever we pray, or worship and serve Allah, or glorify His name, we must accept Allah totally, with perfect *īmān.* Purity must reign in our hearts. In order to worship Allah, who transcends both purity and impurity, we must stand in the station of purity in our hearts. May we strive hard to worship Him with that purity. *Āmīn.* May we accept this state with full faith.

Today is the last day of the fast. Tomorrow is the day we celebrate the *'Īdul-Fitr,* a day of rejoicing for having fulfilled the commands of Allah. We have observed the fast in God's name, and we have glorified the name of God.

My precious children! We confirm that you observed the fast. We are happy and we commend you. But *Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan* alone knows whether your fast made Him happy. If He is to accept your fast, He will do so only because of your heart and the intentions in your heart. It may be that some children were fasting without knowing the real meaning of the fast, but their hearts were observing it in the proper manner. Therefore, I say that Allah will have accepted their fast. Why? Because in their hearts they have steadfast *īmān,* absolute faith in Allah. Through that *īmān* they have fulfilled the fast.

My precious children! What I have been telling you about is the true meaning and significance of fasting: treating other lives as though they are your own life, feeling the hunger of others as your own hunger and offering them food, feeling the difficulties of others as though they were your own and attempting to bring them relief.

If we can establish this state in us, if we can perform our duties in this way, we will have made our fast complete. Allah alone will be our wealth. In that state we will have surrendered to Him and have absolute faith in Him. If we are surrendered to Him, we will not own anything. Our hands will be empty. Then what can we give? What can we do? We will be His slaves and He will be our Master, our Lord. We must establish that state in us. We must realize what

our fast will be like when we have reached that state.

If I were to tell you in greater detail about the conditions that must be observed in order to make this fast truly complete, there would not be sufficient time. And it might make you feel sad. Therefore I will not tell you.

May God fill your hearts with light. May He make your hearts luminous. May He accept your fasts and bless you with His benevolent grace. May He fill your intentions with light and grace and make them complete. May He make your hearts the wealth of all three worlds—the beginning, this world, and the hereafter *(awwal, dunyā,* and *ākhirah).* May this wealth be filled with light. May He bless you with the wealth of wisdom. May He bless you with the wealth of His qualities. May He bless you with the wealth of His duties, His *wilāyāt.* May He bestow on you the wealth of His compassionate grace. May His look of grace be upon you at every moment. May He fulfill all your wants, and may He protect you from all dangers. Now and in the hereafter may He be your protector and safeguard you. May Allah be pleased with you and shower His love on you at every moment. May He hold you in His embrace and protect you from any kind of danger or disaster. May He bless you with remembrance, so that at every moment your intention for Him may be strong and steadfast. Whatever the circumstances be, may He bestow His house on you. May He give you a beautiful house in His kingdom and elevate your position there. May you always be His entrusted treasure. Believe in Him without the slightest doubt and surrender to Him.

May you merge with Him who is without partner or equal, and may your worship be free from ascribing partners or equals to Him. There is nothing equal to Him. So worship Him with a prayer that has no equal or parallel. Open your hearts in a state of peace and tell Him what is in your heart. Whatever rises up in your heart, tell Him. Tell Him all your intentions. He is the One who knows everything and understands everything. Knowing what your intentions are, He will help you. Understanding your wants, He will comfort you. Knowing your illnesses, He will treat you. Knowing your mind, He will bring you peace.

That Father who is God, *Allāhu ta'ālā*—accept only Him. Glorify only Him. Open your hearts and speak to Him. In that state Allah

will protect you. Do not forget your certitude of faith. Do not lose your *īmān.* Do not let go of your steadfast determination. Do not be deceived by the qualities of satan into losing Allah's love. May God give you completion, bless you with the wealth of the three worlds and the light of grace, dispel the darkness, take you on the straight path, and give you victory in the hereafter. *Āmīn. Āmīn. Alhamdu lillāh.*

As-salāmu 'alaikum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuhu kulluhu (May the peace, the beneficence, and blessing of God be upon you).

August 23, 1979

Appendix

The Seven Levels of Consciousness

In the book *Questions of Life—Answers of Wisdom,* Bawa Muhaiyaddeen has explained that what is called wisdom is not a simple thing. There are seven levels of wisdom, or states of consciousness: feeling, awareness, intellect, assessment, or judgment, subtle wisdom, divine analytic or discerning wisdom, and divine luminous wisdom.

All lives have the first three levels: feeling, awareness, and intellect. Using these three, when they are pricked they feel it and wriggle, and when something bites, they are aware of its location and know to brush it away. These three levels are present in animals, in snakes, in grass and weeds, and even in insects.

Man possesses these three levels of consciousness, but he also possesses four levels above and beyond these: assessment, subtle wisdom, divine analytic wisdom, and divine luminous wisdom. With these God has given the human being a connection to Him. He has placed His kingdom within the human being and the human being within His kingdom through these seven levels. How is it revealed?

The words of the prophets first come to feeling, then feeling explains it to awareness, and awareness conveys each message to the intellect. We receive them with our intellect and then follow them. Beyond that is judgment or assessment which we use to evaluate our life. The *Qutb* functions as the higher levels of wisdom, going beyond intellect to deeper and deeper levels, and as we grow in wisdom, it shows us the meaning at each step, point by point. First as subtle wisdom, it helps us to see and understand the subtlety within each different point. Then, as divine analytic wisdom, the *Qutb* explains what this is and what that is and then analyzes the difference between them. Finally it becomes divine luminous wisdom, the *Nūr.* That is the completeness which says, "This is His power."

In the book *Dhikr: The Remembrance of God,* Bawa Muhaiyaddeen gave the following definitions of these seven states of consciousness:

1. *Unarvu:* Feeling, or perception. With perception, man inquires into his actions and the meaning of his life. In addition, by placing his feeling within the feelings of other lives, he will understand the state God has given to that life. On the physical level, *unarvu* is sensory perception, which informs a person, for example, that something is crawling on his foot.

2. *Unarchi:* Awareness. With awareness, man locates and pinpoints his feelings and perception and inquires into himself. Also, by sending his awareness to mingle with the awareness of the countless creations, he can understand their consciousness and know what they are aware of. On the physical level, *unarchi* informs us of the location of the sensations felt by *unarvu.*

3. *Pudthi:* Intellect. Intellect is the cognitive ability of the five elements. It is the essence of the understanding gained through feeling and awareness. It emerges from them and has control over them.

4. *Mathi:* Assessment, or judgment. At this level, man estimates the realm that his soul emerged from *(awwal),* the realm of this world *(dunyā),* and the realm of the hereafter *(ākhirah).* It assesses his life, his body, and his wisdom.

5. *Arivu:* Subtle wisdom. The five elements of earth, fire, water, air, and ether can function only up to the third level, which is intellect. Only man possesses the fourth level, assessment. *Arivu* is the subtle wisdom that arises from the essence of his assessment, his ability to assess things.

6. *Pahuth arivu:* Divine analytic wisdom. This wisdom emerges from the essence of subtle wisdom, or *arivu.* It is the wisdom which distinguishes between right and wrong and takes only what is right. It cuts away the illusions of the elements and explains the truth of God. It exists as atom within atom in man and opens up and analyzes everything—what a man sees, hears, smells, tastes, and feels; what he intends, dreams, and realizes; heaven and hell; the plenitude of God. This sixth level of wisdom is known as *Muhaiyaddeen* and *Qutbiyyat.*

7. *Perr arivu:* Divine luminous wisdom. This wisdom emerges from the *Qutbiyyat.* It is God's greatest gift to man, the divine luminous wisdom that allows him to realize that he exists within God, and God exists within him. At this seventh level, man totally surrenders to God, *tawakkul-'alallāh.* This is the wisdom of the *Nūr.* The light that resplends from it is Allah.

Glossary

The following traditional supplications in Arabic calligraphy are used throughout the text:

ﷺ following the Prophet Muhammad or *Rasūlullāh* stands for *sallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam,* may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him.

ﷺ following the name of a prophet or an angel stands for *'alaihis-salām,* peace be upon him.

ﷺ following the name of a companion of the Prophet Muhammad, a saint, or *khalīfah* stands for *radiyallāhu 'anhu* or *'anhā,* may Allah be pleased with him or her.

(A) Indicates an Arabic word

(T) Indicates a Tamil word

(U) Indicates an Urdu word

(P) Indicates a Persian word

(S) Indicates a Sanskrit word

(Singh.) Indicates a Singhalese word

agnānam (T) Ignorance; worldly or materialistic wisdom; ignorance of the Truth, of what is lasting, or eternal.

ahādīth (A) (sing. *hadīth)* In Islam, authenticated accounts relating the deeds and utterances of the Prophet ﷺ. Words of wisdom; discourse of wisdom.

Ahamad (A & T) The light of the beauty of Allah's essence *(dhāt),* which is the inner heart, called *aham,* or *qalb.*

aiyō (T) An exclamatory expression, "Oh no!"

Ajmer: A town in northern India.

ākhirah (A) The hereafter; the next world; the divine world; the kingdom of God.

'ālamīn (A) (sing. *'ālam)* Worlds, universes.

al-hamd (A) The praise; the *qalb,* or heart, of man; the heart of praise; the five letters *alif, lām, mīm, hā',* and *dāl* which, when transformed, form the perfectly pure heart.

al-hamdu lillāh (A) All praise is to Allah. Allah is the glory and greatness that deserves all praise. "You are the One responsible for the appearance of all creations. Whatever appears, whatever disappears, whatever receives benefit or loss—all is Yours. I have surrendered everything into Your hands. I remain with hands outstretched, spread out, empty, and helpless. Whatever is happening and whatever is going to happen is all Yours."

āli (T) Deep ocean.

alif (A) The first letter of the Arabic alphabet (ا). To the transformed man of wisdom, the *alif* represents Allah, the One.

alif, lām, mīm, hā', dāl (A) Five Arabic letters. In the transformed man of wisdom, these letters are represented as: *alif—Allah; lām—Nūr,* the light of wisdom; *mīm*—Muhammad. *Hā'* and *dāl* correspond to the body of five elements (earth, fire, water, air, and ether), to the *sirr* (secret) and the *sifāt* (manifestations of creations), and to mind and desire. *See also* each individual letter.

'ālim (A) (pl. *'ulamā')* Learned one.

Allah or *Allāhu* (A) God; the One and Only; the One of infinite grace and incomparable love; the One who gives of His undiminishing wealth of grace; the One who is beyond comparison or example; the Eternal, Effulgent One; the One of overpowering effulgence.

Allāh-Muhammad (A) The station wherein Muhammad ﷺ becomes perfection, becomes complete. What is called Muhammad ﷺ is a "form" within which Allah resides and from within which He speaks. Muhammad ﷺ is absolutely united with Allah existing only as a vehicle for the manifestation of His essence and attributes.

Allāhu Akbar (A) God is great!

Allāhu subhānahu wa ta'ālā (A) Allah, glorified and high is He, a spontaneous outpouring of love from a believer's heart upon hearing or uttering the name of Allah.

Allāhu ta'ālā Nāyan (A & T) God is the Lord above all. *Allāhu* (A) Almighty God; *ta'ālā* (A) the One who exists in all lives in a state of humility and exaltedness; *Nāyan* (T) the Ruler who protects and sustains.

amānah (A) A trust; trust property; treasure given in trust.

Āmīn (A) So be it. May God make this complete; may it be so.

amīr (A) Prince; leader.

ammārah (A) *See nafs.*

anāthi (T) The beginningless beginning; the state in which God was alone, meditating upon Himself; the period before creation when Allah was alone in darkness, unaware of Himself, even though everything was within Him; the state of unmanifestation, before the creation came forth.

anbu (T) Love.

'arsh (A) The throne of God; the plenitude from which God rules; the station located on the crown of the head, which is the throne that can bear the weight of Allah. Allah is so heavy that we cannot carry the load with our hands or legs. The *'arsh* is the only part of the human being that can support Allah.

arwāh (A) (sing. *rūh)* The divine realm; heaven; the world of pure souls; the period in which the souls were manifested. Lit. souls.

'asr (A) The afternoon prayer; the third of the five daily prayers in Islam.

as-salāmu 'alaikum (A) "May the peace and peacefulness of Allah be upon you." This is a greeting of love. *As-salāmu 'alaikum, wa 'alaikumus-salām.* One heart embraces the other with love and greets it with respect and honor. Both hearts are one. In reply, *wa 'alaikumus-salām* means, "May the peace and peacefulness of Allah be upon you also."

as-salāmu 'alaikum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuhu kulluhu (A) May all the peace, the beneficence, and the blessings of God be upon you.

āthi or *Āthi* (T) Primal beginning; the period after *anāthi* (the beginningless beginning); the time when the *Nūr* (the plenitude of the light of Allah) and the *Qutb* (the wisdom which explains the truth of God) manifested within Allah; the time of the dawning of the light; the world of grace where the unmanifested begins to manifest in the form of resonance. In

contrast to *awwal,* when the creations became manifest in form, *āthi* is the time when the first sound or vibration emerged. *Āthi* also refers to Allah, the Primal, Original One.

a'udhu billāhi minash-shaitānir-rajīm (A) I seek refuge in Allah from the evils of the accursed satan. "Please annihilate satan from within me. Eliminate him from within me and burn him up. *Minal* (T) is the fire of the resplendent light that comes like lightning. In the same way that lightning strikes, burn him away from me. Burn satan who is the enemy to the children of Adam (ﷺ). He is the one who has separated us from You, O God. Please prevent that enemy from coming and mingling within us. Prevent him from coming once again into our midst, and take us back to You."

avathānam (T) Concentration; attentiveness.

awwal (A) The time of the creation of forms; the stage at which the soul became surrounded by form and each creation took shape; the stage at which the souls of the six kinds of lives (earth life, fire life, water life, air life, ether life, and light life) were placed in their respective forms. Allah created these forms and then placed that entrusted treasure *(amānah)* which is the soul within those forms.

Ayōtthi: A city in northern India, mentioned in the Tamil epic *Ramayana.*

Badushāh (P) Ruler; emperor. The title of *Badushāh* is also used for Allah, the King of kings, the Lord of all kingdoms; the One who protects and nourishes.

bid'ah (A) An innovation in religion.

Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm (A) In the name of God, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate.

Bismillāh: Allah, the first and the last; the One with a beginning and without a beginning. He is the One who is the cause for creation and for the absence of creation, the cause for the beginning and for the beginningless. He is the One who is completeness.

ar-Rahmān: He is the King, the Compassionate One, and the Beneficent One. He is the One who protects all creations and gives them nourishment. He looks after them, gives them love, takes them unto Himself, and comforts them. He gives them food, houses, property, and everything within Himself. He holds His creations within Himself and protects them. He is the One who reigns with justice.

ar-Rahīm: He is the One who redeems, the One who protects us from evil, the One who preserves and confers eternal bliss. No matter what we may do, He has the quality of forgiving us and accepting us back. He is the Tolerant One who forgives all the faults we have committed. He is the Savior. On the Day of Judgment, on the Day of Inquiry, and on all days since the beginning, He protects and brings His creations back unto Himself.

Bismin (A) A shortened form of *Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm.*

daulat (A) Wealth; the wealth of the grace of Allah. The wealth of Allah is the wealth of divine knowledge *('ilm)* and the wealth of unshakable faith *(īmān).*

dhāt (A) The essence of God; His treasury; His wealth of purity; His grace.

dhikr (A) The remembrance of God. It is a common name given to traditional prayers in praise of God. Of the many *dhikrs,* the most exalted *dhikr* is to say, *"Lā ilāha illallāhu:* There is nothing other than You, O God. Only You are Allah." All the other *dhikrs* relate to His actions *(wilāyāt),* but this *dhikr* points to Him and to Him alone. It is the *dhikr* of Allah's *'arsh* (throne). *See also kalimah; Lā ilāha illallāhu.*

dīn (A) The pure light. *Dīnul-Islām* is the beauty of the pure light. Perfect purity, its light, and its truth are known as *dīn* and *dīnul-Islām.* The resplendence of perfectly pure *īmān,* absolute faith, certitude, and determination. Lit. religion; faith; path.

dīnul-Islām (A) *See dīn.*

du'ā' (A) A prayer of supplication.

dunyā (A) The earth-world in which we live; the world of physical existence; the darkness which separated from Allah at the time when the light of the *Nūr Muhammad* manifested from within Allah.

Furqān (A) The religion or scripture of Islam, corresponding to the fourth step of spiritual ascendance. *Furqān* was revealed to Moses (as) and Muhammad (saw). It is the "criterion" which distinguishes between good and evil, right and wrong, lawful and unlawful, truth and illusion. This is the region of the head and the seven openings (two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and one mouth), through which man receives explanations. *See also Injīl; Jabrāt, Zabūr.*

furūd (A) (sing. *fard)* Obligatory duties; to understand the rules and commandments of Allah, to accept them, and act accordingly. In Islam there are five obligatory duties *(furūd)* known as the five pillars: 1) *ash-shahādah* (witnessing that there is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God), 2) prayer, 3) charity, 4) fasting, and 5) holy pilgrimage *(hajj).*

Allah has also given us six inner *furūd,* which the Sufis have explained. 1) If you go deep into Allah with the certitude of unwavering faith, you will see that within this eye of yours is an inner eye which can gaze upon Allah. 2) Within this nostril is a piece of flesh which can smell the fragrance of Allah. 3) Within this ear is a piece of flesh which can hear the sounds of Allah. 4) Within this tongue is a piece of flesh which can taste the beauty and the divine knowledge of Allah and know the taste of His wealth. 5) Within this tongue is also a voice which converses with Him and recites His remembrance in a state of total absorption. 6) And within this innermost heart is a piece of flesh where the eighteen thousand universes, the heavens, and His kingdom are found. It is there that the angels, heavenly beings, prophets, and lights of Allah prostrate before Him.

gnānam (T) Divine wisdom. If a person can throw away all the worldly wealth and take within him only the treasure called Allah and His qualities and actions, His conduct and behavior, if he makes Allah the only treasure and completeness for him—that is the state of *gnānam.*

gnāni (T) A gnostic; one who has divine wisdom, or *gnānam,* one who has received the qualities and wisdom of God by surrendering to God, and, having received these, lives in a state of peace where he sees all lives as equal; one who has attained the state of peace.

guru (T) A divinely wise spiritual teacher or guide; a *shaikh.*

hadīth (A) (pl. *ahādīth) See ahādīth.*

hajj (A) The holy pilgrimage to Mecca; the fifth *fard* (obligatory duty) in Islam. This duty must be done wearing the white shroud *(kafan),* signifying that one has died to the world. Before undertaking this pilgrimage, one's wealth must be shared among the poor. A person with spouse and children must divide his wealth among them. True pilgrimage is to enter the state of dying before death. The inner desires must be surrendered and all of the self must die to make this pilgrimage.

hāl (A) A transient state of being or condition of the heart of man which comes without effort. Used in contrast to *maqām* (spiritual station).

halāl (A) Permissible; those things that are permissible or lawful according to the commands of God and which conform to the word of God.

haqīqat (A) The third step of spiritual ascendance. To merge with God, to become a slave to His beauty and His love, to be blissful with Him, and to join with Him is *haqīqat.*

haqq (A) Truth; reality; the truth which is God; *al-Haqq:* one of the ninety-nine beautiful names of God.

harām (A) Forbidden; impermissible; that which is forbidden by truth, justice, and the commands of God. For those who are on the straight path, *harām* means all the evil things, actions, food, and dangers that can obstruct the path.

Hawwā' ﷺ (A) Eve; also known as Hawwā' Ammā and Wawammā.

hayāt (A) Life; the plenitude of man's eternal life; the splendor of the completeness of life; the soul *(rūh)* of the splendor of man's life.

hū (A) Within the heart, there is a sound which goes on resonating with the sound, *"Hū, hū, hū, hū!"* It is a resonance which never diminishes no matter how much we take from it. That resonance is *Allāhu. See also Allāhu.*

'ibādat (A) Worship and service to the One God.

'Īdul-Fitr (A) The Islamic festival which marks the end of *Ramadān,* the month of fasting. The celebrations include special prayers, the giving of alms, giving gifts, wearing new clothes, visiting friends and family, and feasting. This is considered the second most important holiday in the Islamic year, *'Īdul-Adhā* (the feast of the sacrifice during *hajj)* being the first.

illallāh(u) (A) Nothing other than Allah. The second part of the *dhikr,* which accompanies the breath as it is drawn in through the right nostril and is finally deposited in the inner heart. *See also Lā ilāha illallāhu.*

'ilm (A) Knowledge; divine knowledge; that secret knowledge, or light, that shines in the heart of the truly pious, whereby one becomes enlightened.

imām (A) One who leads the congregation in the five-times prayer of Islam.

īmān (A) Absolute, complete, and unshakable faith, certitude, and determination that God alone exists; the complete acceptance by the heart

that God is One.

Imān-Islām (A) The state of the spotlessly pure heart which contains Allah's *Thiru Qur'ān,* His divine radiance, His divine wisdom, His truth, His prophets, His angels, and His laws. The pure heart which, having cut away all evil, takes on the power of that courageous determination called faith and stands shining in the resplendence of Allah. When the resplendence of Allah is seen as the completeness within the heart of man, that is *Īmān-Islām.* When the complete unshakable faith of the heart is directed toward the One who is completeness; when that completeness is made to merge with the One who is completeness; when that heart communes with that One, trusts only in Him, and worships only Him, accepting only Him and nothing else as the only perfection and the only One worthy of worship—that is *Īmān-Islām.*

Injīl (A) The religion or scripture of Christianity, which corresponds to the third step of spiritual ascendance. This is the region of the chest which is filled with thoughts, emotions, spirits, and vapors. *See also Furqān; Jabrāt; Zabūr.*

insān(s) (A) Man; a human being. The true form of man is the form of Allah's qualities, actions, conduct, behavior, and virtues. The one who has realized the completeness of this form, having filled himself with these qualities, is truly an *insān.*

insān-Allāh (A) Man-God.

insān kāmil (A) A perfected, God-realized being; one who has realized Allah as his only wealth, cutting away all the wealth of the world and the wealth sought by the mind; one who has acquired God's qualities, performs his own actions accordingly, and immerses himself within those qualities.

insān kāmil shaikh (A) *See kāmil shaikh.*

in shā' Allāh (A) If God so wills.

Isrāfil (A) Raphael, the archangel of air.

'Izrā'īl (A) Israel, the Angel of Death; the archangel of fire.

Jabrāt (A) The religion or scripture of Zoroastrianism, or fire worship, which corresponds to the second step of spiritual ascendance. *Jabrāt* relates to hunger, disease, and old age, and is in the area of the stomach. *See also Furqān; Injīl; Zabūr.*

al-Jalāl (A) The Lofty, the Majestic; one of the attributes of God.

al-Jamāl (A) The Beautiful, the Friendly; one of the attributes of God.

Jibrīl (ع) (A) Gabriel, the heavenly messenger who transmits divine wisdom; the archangel who brings the revelations of Allah. It is through Jibrīl (ع) that Allah conveyed the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

jihād (A) Sacred fight or struggle. True *jihād* is a war between truth and falsehood; it is not between the children of Adam (ع). All the fighting on the outside is brought on by the satanic qualities inside. If we can fight the war in our hearts and win, there need be no fighting on the outside. The real war is to perfect one's *īmān* and to triumph over satan's qualities.

juz' (A) One of the thirty portions into which the Qur'an is divided.

Ka'bah (A) The *Ka'bah,* also known as the House of God *(Baitullāh),* is the central point toward which all Muslims turn to pray five times a day and is also the object of the pilgrimage *(hajj),* the fifth *fard* (obligatory duty) of Islam. This cube-like building was originally built by Adam (ع) in what is now the city of Mecca and has been rebuilt numerous times throughout the ages, most notably by Prophet Abraham (ع) and his son, Prophet Ishmael (ع). The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was commanded by God to cleanse the *Ka'bah* of all idols and to restore its original purity and sanctity.

Within the human being, the *Ka'bah* represents the heart *(qalb),* the original source of prayer. It is the place in which a true human being meets God face to face. Like the outer *Ka'bah,* this sanctuary, too, must be cleansed of idols and restored to its original purity as the house in which God abides.

kafan (A) The shroud used to wrap a corpse. It is a white robe which stands for purity. It is the robe of *īmān,* worn when *īmān* dawns after the death of the *nafs* (base desires).

kāfir (A) One who conceals Allah's truth; one who fails to live according to Allah's qualities and virtues despite being aware of what Allah has commanded and forbidden; one who is ungrateful or who rejects Allah after having awareness of the truth; one who worships things as equal to Allah, falling under the power of his base desires. Such a one hides the truth out of purely selfish motives, turning the heart into the form of darkness, falling prey to the forces of satan, and acquiring the qualities of satan.

kalimah (A) The affirmation of faith—*Lā ilāha illallāhu:* There is nothing other than You, O God. Only You are Allah. The recitation or remembrance of God which cuts away the influence of the five elements (earth, fire, water, air, and ether), washes away all the *karma* that has accumulated from the very beginning until now, dispels the darkness, beautifies the heart, and makes it resplend. The *kalimah* washes the body and the heart of man and makes him pure, makes his wisdom emerge, and impels that wisdom to know the self and God. *See also dhikr; Lā ilāha illallāhu.*

kāmil (A) Perfect; complete.

kāmil shaikh (A) Perfect spiritual guide; the true *guru;* the one who, knowing himself and God, guides others on the straight path to Allah; one who has developed the three thousand gracious qualities of Allah. Sitting on the throne of patience, with the quality of compassion, the *kāmil shaikh* comforts his children and dispels the *karmic* evils of this world. He teaches them subtle wisdom. He teaches them about the form and makes them realize the form within the form. This form, or *sūrat,* is the light of the *Nūr.* He also shows his children the form and the light of *īmān* and shows that Allah is the wealth that exists within *īmān.*

karīm (A) Generous, noble; *al-Karīm,* the Generous, the Bountiful, the Beneficent, is one of the ninety-nine beautiful names *(al-asmā'ul-husnā)* of Allah.

karma (T) The inherited qualities formed at the time of conception; the qualities of the essence of the five elements; the qualities of the mind; the qualities of the connection to hell.

kasthūri (T) The fragrance of grace that emanates from Allah's gracious qualities, from His good thoughts, from His form of beauty, from His *qalb;* the fragrance of His resplendent qualities. He gave this fragrance to Muhammad ﷺ, comparing it to the fragrance of musk.

khair (A) That which is right or good; that which is acceptable to wisdom and to Allah, as opposed to *sharr,* that which is evil or bad.

Khidr Nabī ﷺ (A) The Eternal Prophet, the Prophet of life existing eternally as divine analytic wisdom, the sixth level of consciousness.

khutbah (A) The sermon, or exhortation, delivered during the Friday congregational prayer *(jum'ah).* When the *qalb* (innermost heart) is

surrendered to Allah, when it prostrates to Him and hands over everything to His responsibility, when *īmān* becomes the resplendent light for the *qalb,* that *qalb* becomes Allah's mosque. In that mosque, with lowered head and bowed heart, one must listen with divine wisdom to the words of Allah's *Rasūl* (ﷺ) and prostrate to God. This is the true meaning of *khutbah.*

kitāb(s) (A) Book.

kufr (A) A state of disbelief. The rejection of faith in Allah, the *Rasūl* (ﷺ), and the Qur'an. Lit. that which covers the truth; ingratitude.

kursī (A) The gnostic eye; the eye of light; the center of the forehead where Allah's resplendence *(Nūr)* was impressed on Adam's (ع) forehead. Lit. stool or seat.

Lā ilāha illallāhu (A) There is nothing other than You, O God. Only You are Allah. To accept this with certitude, to strengthen one's unshakable faith *(īmān),* and to affirm this *kalimah* is the state of Islam.

There are two aspects. *Lā ilāha* is the manifestation of creation *(sifāt). Illallāhu* is the essence *(dhāt).* All that has appeared, all creation, belongs to *lā ilāha.* The name of the One who created all that is *illallāhu.* Lit. No god (is), except the One God. *See also dhikr; kalimah.*

Lā ilāha illallāhu Muhammadur-Rasūlullāh (A) There is nothing other than You, O God. Only You are Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.

Lā ilāha illallāhu Muhammaduw-wa Rasūlullāh (A) *See Muhammaduw-wa Rasūlullāh.*

lām (A) The Arabic letter (ل) which corresponds to the English consonant 'l'. In the transformed man of wisdom, *lām* represents the *Nūr,* the resplendence of Allah.

al-lauhul-mahfūz (A) The preserved tablet; the tablet of light upon which is inscribed the secret nature of all things and the history of all that will come to pass in *awwal, dunyā,* and *ākhirah* (the beginning, this world, and the hereafter).

lebbe (U) One who gives his life in service to God in a mosque and performs various duties within the mosque of Islam.

madhhab (A) A system or school of thought in Islamic law *(fiqh).* There

are four of these schools among the Sunnī Muslims, each established according to the interpretations of the Qur'an and *ahādīth* made by one of four *imāms:* Imām Abū Hanīfah, Imām Mālik, Imām ash-Shāfi'ī, and Imām ibn Hanbal.

mā shā' Allāh (A) "Whatever God has willed." Used to express *tawakkul* or trust in Allah and what He has decreed.

mal'ūn (A) Accursed, rejected; a name attributed to satan.

ma'rifat (A) Gnosis, the fourth step of spiritual ascendance. *Ma'rifat* is a state in which there is no day and night, only light. It is beyond the ten sins. It is unity with Allah, intermingling with light, and existing in light always.

maulā (A) Lord; master.

maulawī (A) A *shaikh;* a teacher; religious scholar.

māyā (T) Illusion; the unreality of the visible world; the glitters seen in the darkness of illusion; the 105 million glitters seen in the darkness of the mind which result in 105 million rebirths. *Māyā* is an energy, or *sakthi,* which takes on various shapes, causes man to forfeit his wisdom, and confuses and hypnotizes him into a state of torpor. It can take many, many millions of hypnotic forms. If man tries to grasp one of these forms with his intellect, although he sees the form he will never catch it, for it will elude him by taking on yet another form.

māyā sakthi(s) (T) Energies or forces of *māyā,* or illusion.

Mīkā'īl ﷺ (A) Michael, the archangel of water.

mīm (A) The Arabic letter (م) which corresponds to the English consonant 'm'. In the transformed man of wisdom, *mīm* represents Muhammad ﷺ. The shape of *mīm* is like a sperm cell and from this comes the *nuqtah,* or dot, which is the form of the world.

mīn (T) Fish.

Mi'rāj (A) The mystical journey of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through the heavens which took place in the twelfth year of the Prophet's ﷺ mission on the twenty-seventh day of the month of *Rajab.* During this event the divine order for the five-times prayer was given. Lit. an ascent.

miskīn (A) A poor person; one who possesses no property at all.

mīzān (A) The scale of judgment which weighs the *qalb* (the innermost heart).

Moodēvi (T) One of two sisters in a Tamil story; Moodēvi represents evil qualities. *See also* Seedēvi.

mu'adhdhin (A) The one who gives the call to prayer *(adhān)* for the five daily prayers of Islam.

Muhammaduw-wa Rasūlullāh (A) This is Bawa Muhaiyaddeen's pronunciation of *Muhammadur-Rasūlullāh;* with this he indicated the certainty that Muhammad ﷺ is the final Messenger, and there will be no other messenger after him.

mu'min(s) (A) A true believer; one of pure faith.

munivar(s) (T) An ascetic; one who attains certain occult powers *(sitthis)* through meditation and ascetic practices.

Munkar and Nakīr ؑ (A) The two angels who, in the grave, question the actions of every part of the body.

murīd (A) Disciple; one who follows and learns wisdom from one who has accepted Allah with absolute certainty and sees no god other than Allah.

Mūsā ؑ (A) The Prophet Moses ؑ.

nabī (A) A prophet. One who has accepted Allah's commandments and has surrendered to Him alone is a *nabī.* One who accepts Allah's covenants and does service to Him is a *nabī.* One who does the kind of service which can be rewarded only by Allah is a *nabī.*

nafs or *nafs ammārah* (A) The seven kinds of base desires. That is, desires meant to satisfy one's own pleasure and comfort. All thoughts are contained within the *ammārah. Ammārah* is like the mother while the *nafs* are like children. Lit. person; spirit; inclination or desire which goads or incites toward evil.

Nainār (T) A term of respect, accorded to one who is a true guide, one who is an exemplar in wisdom and qualities. Lit. Master.

nasīb (A) Destiny; fate.

nithānam (T) Balance.

nuqtah (A) (pl. *nuqat)* Dot or point; diacritical mark placed over or under certain Arabic letters to differentiate one from the other. The entirety of creation is contained within the *nuqtah* under the Arabic letter *bā'* (ب).

Nūr (A) Light; the resplendence of Allah; the plenitude of the light of Allah, which has the brilliance of a hundred million suns; the completeness of Allah's qualities. When the plenitude of all these becomes one and resplends as one, that is the *Nūr,* that is Allah's qualities and His beauty. It is the resplendent wisdom that is innate in man and can be awakened.

Nūr Muhammad (A) The beauty of the qualities and actions of the powers *(wilāyāt)* of Allah, the radiance of Allah's essence *(dhāt)* which shines within the resplendence of His truth. It was the light of Muhammad ﷺ called *Nūr Muhammad* that was impressed upon the forehead of Adam ؑ. Of the nine aspects of Muhammad ﷺ, *Nūr Muhammad* is that aspect which is Allah's wisdom.

panja-sīla (Singh.) The five precepts or minimum moral obligations taught by Buddha are: 1) not to destroy life, 2) not to steal, 3) not to commit adultery, 4) not to tell lies, and 5) not to take intoxicants.

pūjā(s) (T) Ritual offerings in prayer or worship.

purānas (T) Stories, usually referring to the Hindu scriptures; mythologies; legends; epics. The stories of each religion can be described as *purānas.* Some were sent down as commandments from God, others were created through man's intelligence and senses, while still others were created by poets, usually as songs of praise depicting stories.

Bawa Muhaiyaddeen ؒ speaks of the seventeen *purānas* within man as the qualities of arrogance, *karma,* and *māyā;* the three sons of *māyā (tārahan, singhan,* and *sūran);* lust, anger, miserliness, attachment, fanaticism, envy, intoxicants, obsession, theft, murder, and falsehood.

al-Qahhār (A) The Dominant, the Subduer, the Almighty. One of the ninety-nine beautiful names of God.

qalam (A) The divine pen; the pen with which God is said to have prerecorded the actions of human beings. In the *ahādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ, it is said that the first thing which God created was the pen *(qalam)* and that it wrote down the destiny of every individual thing to be created, all that was and all that would be, to all eternity.

qalb (A) Heart; the heart within the heart of man; the innermost heart.

Bawa Muhaiyaddeen ﷺ explains that there are two states for the *qalb.* In one state the *qalb* is made up of four chambers, which are earth, fire, air, and water—representing Hinduism, fire worship, Christianity, and Islam. Inside these four chambers is the second state, the flower of the *qalb* which is the divine qualities of God. This is the flower of grace *(rahmat).* God's fragrance exists within this inner *qalb.*

qiblah (A) The direction one faces in prayer. In Islam, the place where everything unites as one is the *Ka'bah;* therefore the *qiblah* for Muslims is the *Ka'bah,* in Mecca. Inwardly, the *qiblah* is the throne of God within the heart *(qalb).*

Qiyāmah (A) The Day of Standing Forth; Day of Reckoning; Day of Questioning.

qurbān (A) Externally, it is a ritual method for the slaughter of animals in order to purify them and make them permissible, or *halāl,* to eat. Inwardly, it is to purify one's heart *(qalb)* by sacrificing and cutting away the animal qualities existing within oneself, thus making one's life *halāl.* The *Subhānallāhi Kalimah* was revealed for the purpose of destroying these animal qualities within the *qalb.*

Qutb ﷺ or *qutb* (A) One who functions in the state of divine analytic wisdom *(pahuth arivu),* the sixth level of consciousness. The one who, having measured the length and breadth of the seven oceans of the base desires, raises up the ship of life that lies buried in the ocean of *māyā,* and rescues it from that ocean of desires. The *qutbiyyat* is the grace, the vibration, and the wisdom of Allah's essence that awakens true faith *(īmān),* restores the twelve weapons of the *Qutb* from the ocean of *māyā,* and returns the life to the form of purity it had in *arwāh,* when it emerged from Allah. *Qutb* is also a title used for the great holy men of Islam.

qutbiyyat (A) Divine analytic wisdom, or *pahuth arivu,* which is the sixth level of consciousness; the wisdom of the *Qutb;* the wisdom that explains the truth of God.

Rabb (A) God; the Lord; the Creator and Protector.

ar-Rahīm (A) The Most Compassionate; the Sustainer and Redeemer; one of the ninety-nine beautiful names *(al-asmā'ul-husnā)* of Allah. He is the One who is full of endless compassion for all lives. *See also Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahīm.*

ar-Rahmān (A) The Most Gracious, Most Merciful. *Ar-Rahmān*—one of the ninety-nine beautiful names *(al-asmā'ul-husnā)* of Allah. The One who rules is forever ruling with His three thousand compassionate, benevolent qualities. He has no anger at all. His duty is only to protect and sustain.

rahmat (A) God's grace; His mercy; His forgiveness and compassion; His benevolence; His wealth. To all creations, He is the wealth of life *(hayāt)* and the wealth of unshakable faith *(īmān).* All the good things that we receive from God are His *rahmat.* That is the wealth of God's plenitude. Everything that is within God is *rahmat,* and if He were to give that grace, that would be an undiminishing, limitless wealth.

Rahmatul-'ālamīn (A) The Mercy and Compassion for all the universes; the One who gives everything to all His creations.

Ramadān (A) The month of fasting, which is the fourth *fard* (obligatory duty) of Islam.

Raqīb and 'Atīd (A) The two recording angels who keep an account of the good and evil a person does during his life. The angel who records good actions sits on the right shoulder, and the angel who records evil actions sits on the left shoulder.

Rasūl or *rasūl* (A) The Messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad ; God's essence *(dhāt),* the resplendence that emerged from His effulgence, shining radiantly as His Messenger . Muhammad , the manifestation of that resplendence, discourses on the explanations of luminous wisdom, which he imparts to Allah's creations. He is the one who begs for truth from Allah and intercedes with prayers for all of Allah's creations and for his followers. Therefore, Allah has anointed His *Rasūl,* the Prophet Muhammad , with the title: *The Messenger who is the savior for both worlds.* The word *rasūl* can be used to refer to any of Allah's apostles or messengers.

Rasūlullāh (A) The Messenger of Allah; a title used for Prophet Muhammad .

rizq (A) Food; sustenance; the single atom of *rahmat* (grace) that comes directly from God as the true nourishment. All the rest of the food—that which comes from the world—is merely hay for man's desires *(nafs).*

rūh (A) The soul; the light ray of God; the light of God's wisdom. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen explains that *rūh* is life *(hayāt).* Out of the six kinds

of lives it is the light life, the human life. It is a ray of the light of the resplendence of Allah (the *Nūr),* a ray that does not die or disappear. It is the truth. The other five lives appear and disappear. That which exists forever without death is the soul. It is Allah's grace *(rahmat),* which has obtained the wealth of the imperishable treasure of all three worlds *(mubārakāt).*

sabūr (A) Inner patience. Patience is Allah's treasure chest. Going within this treasure chest, reflecting and having forbearance is *sabūr.*

Yā Sabūr—one of the ninety-nine names *(al-asmā'ul-husnā)* of Allah. God, who in a state of limitless patience, is always forgiving the faults of His created beings and continuing to protect them.

sadaqah (A) Charity; contributions to the poor. True charity is to recognize the lives of others to be as valuable as one's own and to comfort and care for them as one would for oneself.

sakthi (T) Elemental energy; force.

salāms (A) Greetings.

samādhi (T) State of equipoise; unbroken state of tranquillity under all circumstances.

sayyid (A) A descendant of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Seedēvi (T) One of two sisters in a Tamil story; Seedēvi represents good qualities. *See also* Moodēvi.

shaikh (A) A spiritual guide or master; one, who knowing himself and God, guides others on the straight path, the path to God.

shakūr (A) Gratitude; contentment with whatever may happen, realizing that everything comes from Allah; contentment arising from gratitude; the state within the inner patience known as *sabūr;* that which is stored within the treasure chest of patience.

Yā Shakūr—one of the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah. To have *shakūr* with the help of the One who is *Yā Shakūr* is true *shakūr.*

shānti (T) True peacefulness.

sharī'at (A) The first step of the five steps of spiritual ascendence *(sharī'at, tarīqat, haqīqat, ma'rifat,* and *sūfiyyat).* Since man was created out of the five elements (earth, fire, water, air, and ether), since he has within him

both light and darkness, good and bad, truth and falsehood, and heaven and hell, he must know the good from the bad. Understanding what is right and what is wrong is *sharī'at.* Discarding what is bad and accepting what is good and acting accordingly is *sharī'at.* Lit. the law.

sharr (A) That which is wrong, bad, or evil, as opposed to *khair,* that which is good.

shirk (A) Externally, *shirk* is creating a picture or idol as a form and worshiping it. Internally, *shirk* is when the mind takes images and ideas and then glorifies them, performing *tasbīh* to them. *Shirk* is everything that has been discarded from Allah. Lit. idolatry; making something a partner to God.

sidratul-muntahā (A) A tree in heaven with leaves that shine like stars, situated close to the throne of God *('arsh).* Each light represents the light of a soul; when the light stops twinkling, this means that that person's *rizq* in the world is finished. Then 'Izrā'īl (ﷺ), the Angel of Death, who keeps a constant watch on this tree, takes that soul.

sifāt (A) (sing. *sifat)* That which arose from the word "Kun!" (Be!); all that has come into being as form. Depending on the context, the word *sifāt* may mean the creations, the manifestations of God, or the attributes of God.

sirr (A) Secret; the secret of Allah.

sitthi(s) (T) Occult feats; magics; miracles; supernatural abilities or feats. The capacity to perform miracles obtained by devotion to and control of the elements.

subh (A) The first of the five daily prayers in Islam, also known as *fajr.*

Subhānallāhi Kalimah (A) *Subhānallāhi wal-hamdu lillāhi wa lā ilāha illallāhu, wallāhu akbar. Wa lā hawla wa lā quwwata illā billāhi wa huwal-'alīyul-'azīm:* Glory be to God, and all praise is to God, and none is god except Allah, and Allah is most great, and none has the majesty or the power to sustain except for God, and He is the majesty, the supreme in glory. Also known as *tasbīh,* or the Third *Kalimah.*

Sufi (A) A mystic who has seen God within himself with the eye of certainty. Having completely settled within the perfection of God in a state of ultimate stillness, he takes on the compassion of God as his own and explains the stillness of that silence from within it.

sūfiyyat (A) The fifth level of spiritual ascendance. The state of one who has transcended the four religions and has merged with God.

In the station of *sūfiyyat,* one speaks without talking, sees without looking, hears without listening, relishes fragrances without smelling, and learns without studying. That knowing cannot be learned, and that understanding cannot be acquired by mere study. These and many other such states come with acquiring the qualities of God and losing oneself within those qualities. Although one still exists within the body, he has built within himself the palace of divine luminous wisdom. One who has perfected this state is a Sufi.

sunnah (A) The sayings and practices of the *Rasūl* ﷺ or other prophets.

sūrat (A) Form or shape.

sūrat Allāh (A) The form of Allah.

sūrat Muhammad (A) The form of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Sūratul-Fātihah (A) The opening chapter of the Qur'an; the inner form of man; the clarity of understanding of the four elements of the body (earth, fire, water, and air), and the realization of the self and of Allah within. The *Sūratul-Fātihah* is recited at the beginning of every prayer. Within man is the *Sūratul-Fātihah,* and within the *Sūratul-Fātihah* is the inner form of man. If we split open that form, we can see within it Allah's words, His qualities, His actions, His three thousand divine attributes, and His ninety-nine powers *(wilāyāt).* That is the inner form of man *(sūratul-insān).*

Fātihah means literally to open out. It is opening the heart and looking within.

sūratul-insān (A) The inner form of man. The inner form of man, or *sūratul-insān,* is the Qur'an and is linked together by the twenty-eight letters. This form *(sūrat)* is the *Ummul-Qur'ān,* the source of the Qur'an. *See also Thiru Marai* or *Thiru Qur'ān.*

Sūratun-Nūr (A) The form of light.

swāmi (T) A spiritual guide; also sometimes used as a term of respectful address.

swarkam (T) Heaven.

swarkapathi (T) The heaven that never perishes; the heaven in which there

is no further birth or death; complete merging with God, so that nothing else remains other than duty.

swarnapathi (T) The kingdom of heaven; the state where the taste of God is known.

takbīr (A) Saying: *"Allāhu Akbar,"* the proclamation that Allah is the greatest. It is the first thing said aloud in the *salāt,* the five times prayer of Islam. After it is said, the arms are "tied" for prayer.

tārahan, singhan, and *sūran* (T) The three sons of illusion *(māyā). Tārahan* is the trench or the pathway for the sexual act, the birth canal or vagina. *Singhan* is the arrogance present at the moment when the semen is ejaculated. It is the quality of the lion. *Sūran* is the illusory images of the mind enjoyed during the sexual act. It is all the qualities and energies of the mind.

tarīqat (A) The second step of spiritual ascendance; unswerving and complete acceptance of the good and the carrying out of every action accordingly; to tell the mind to have *sabūr* (patience) and *shakūr* (contentment), to make itself peaceful, and to make *īmān* firm. Lit. the path. *See also haqīqat; ma'rifat; sharī'at.*

tasbīh (A) Glorification of God; offering prayers of praise; purifying the heart, which is the abode of the One (Allah).

taubah (A) Repentance; to ask God's pardon for sins and errors, to turn away from them, and to vow not to commit them again.

tawakkul or *tawakkul-'alallāh* (A) Absolute trust in God; surrender to God; handing over to God the entire responsibility for everything. *Al-Wakīl* is one of the ninety-nine beautiful names *(al-asmā'ul-husnā)* of Allah: the Trustee, the Guardian.

thānam (T) Surrender.

Thiru Marai (T) or *Thiru Qur'ān* (T & A) The original Qur'an; the inner Qur'an inscribed within the heart. All the secrets and the essence of the three worlds of *awwal, dunyā,* and *ākhirah* (the beginning of creation, the physical world, and the hereafter) have been buried and concealed by Allah within the *Thiru Qur'ān.* Within it, He has concealed the explanations of the essence of grace *(dhāt)* and of the manifestations of creation *(sifāt).* There He has concealed the *alif, lām,* and *mīm;* these three are the essence. That is why it is called the *Thiru Qur'ān. Thiru* means

triple in Tamil.

Literally, *marai* means holy scriptures, and as such it refers to the scriptures and words of every religion. In this sense it is used to describe the book called the Holy Qur'an. But as Bawa Muhaiyaddeen (رضي الله عنه) explains, it is the manifestation of the conscience of God in every age to every nation, revealing to mankind the means of attaining Him. This is the inner Qur'an, the original Qur'an, which becomes manifest from time to time, revealing the guidelines of human conduct in relation to spiritual evolution. If God is the reality immanent within man, then the voice of God (the revelation that proceeds from the *Nūr,* the *perr arivu)* is called *Thiru Marai.*

thiyānam (T) Meditation.

'ulamā' (A) (sing. *'ālim)* Teachers; learned ones; scholars.

ummat (A) Followers of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Lit. a people, nation, community.

vēdas (S) Hindu religious scriptures.

vēdāntas (S) Hindu doctrines or philosophies.

Visvāmithra (T) A well-known ascetic *(munivar)* mentioned in the Tamil *Purānas.*

wa Rasūl (A) *See Muhammaduw-wa Rasūlullāh.*

wahy (A) Revelation; inspiration from God; the inspired word of God revealed to a prophet; the commandments or words of God transmitted by the Archangel Gabriel (عم). *Wahys,* or revelations, have come to Adam (عم), Moses (عم), and various other prophets, but especially to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Muhammad (ﷺ) received 6,666 revelations. The histories of each of the earlier prophets were contained within the revelations given to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

waqt(s) (A) Time of prayer. In the religion of Islam there are five specified *waqts,* or times of prayer, each day. But truly, there is only one *waqt.* That is the prayer that never ends, wherein one is in direct communication with God and one is merged with God.

wilāyāt (A) God's power; that which has been revealed and manifested through God's actions; the miraculous names and actions of God; the powers of His attributes through which all creations came into existence.

Yā (A) The vocative 'O!'. An exclamation of praise; a title of greatness or praise.

yōgi(s) (T) One who practices *yōga.*

Zabūr (A) *Zabūr* is the scripture corresponding to Hinduism, which relates to the creation of form, the appearance of man. In the body, Hinduism relates to the area below the waist. *See also Furqān; Injīl; Jabrāt.*

zamzam (A) The spring that God caused to flow in order to provide water for Hagar (ع), and Ishmael (ع), when they were alone in the desert. Later, Abraham (ع) and Ishmael (ع) built the *Ka'bah* next to this spring, which still flows today. It is said to come from the spring of abundance *(Kauthar)* in paradise.

zuhr (A) The second of the five daily prayers of Islam, which is performed after the sun begins to decline in midday.

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Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen (ق), a Sufi mystic from Sri Lanka, was a man of extraordinary wisdom and compassion. For over seventy years he shared his knowledge and experience with people of every race and religion and from all walks of life.

The central branch of The Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship is located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was Bawa Muhaiyaddeen's residence while he was in the United States until his death in December 1986. The Fellowship continues to serve as a meeting house and a reservoir of people and materials for all who are interested in his teachings.

Also located on the same property is The Mosque of Shaikh Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen where the daily five times of prayer and Friday congregational prayers are held. An hour west of the Fellowship is the *Mazār,* or tomb, of M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen which is open for visitation.

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